Intergenerational aspects of the conflict in Northern Ireland

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An Integrated Approach to Peace-Building

Intergenerational aspects of the conflict in Northern Ireland

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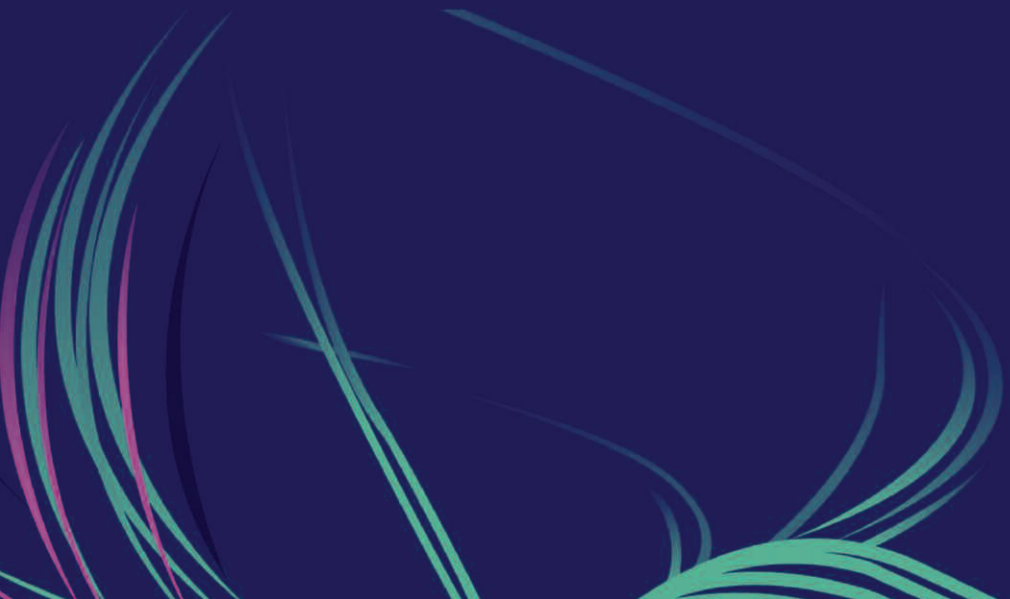
"My Mum and Dad never mention the Troubles. Then something happens, like that bomb in Newry, and they all start talking about it again." Lisburn youth 2010



Contents

Foreword

This is the second in the Irish Peace Centres' series of experiential learning papers. It deals with intergenerational aspects of conflict and specifically of the Northern Ireland conflict. It is an example of the reflective practice which is at the heart of IPC's integrated approach to peace-building; one aim of which is to create a series of papers that reflect the issues which are being dealt with by practitioners. Practitioners are coming across evidence of the intergenerational impact of the conflict in all aspects of their work whether it is storytelling, interface, reconciliation, work with women, young people, victims or former prisoners, in training programmes in good relations, in conferences and seminars, in research and in international exchanges.

The paper reviews the literature on the intergenerational impact of conflict and how it is transmitted, and then describes the results of 11 focus groups conducted in Northern Ireland involving young people, women, victims, former prisoners, rural communities, and faith groups. It draws conclusions to inform practitioners and to highlight future areas of work in this field especially work with the new generation of young people in Northern Ireland. I wish to thank the participants who gave of their time and reflections so generously and honestly. Thanks are also due to Professor Kenneth Bush of INCORE who was generous with his advice. And I thank IPC research fieldworker Stephanie Burns who took the lead in this entire study.

The purpose of the Experiential Learning series of papers is to provide short examinations and analysis of issues which are arising in the work of peace-building practitioners and to disseminate them widely within the sector. Feedback is crucial to the reflective practice model IPC follows and readers are invited to respond to this paper with their comments no matter how critical they are. It is through such critical exchanges that we all learn and develop a practice which is more effective in embedding peace and encouraging reconciliation.

Peter Sheridan OBE
Chair of the IPC Joint Management Committee
March 1st 2010.

Introduction

During 2009 Irish Peace Centres (IPC) completed an evaluation report [1] on a visit by former combatants from the Middle East to Ireland. In the course of that evaluation it emerged that both the Israelis and Palestinians sought justification for their combatant engagement in actions and events which happened before they were born. In the case of the Israelis the Holocaust was the key reference point and for the Palestinians al-Nakba in 1948. There follows a summary of views expressed in answers to survey questions completed before they arrived in Ireland.

All but three of the 14 Israeli participants reported that they were the third generation to Holocaust victims; brothers and sisters of grandparents were killed or sent to work camps and their own grandparents either moved to Israel from the country where they were born, or they moved to other countries within Europe or Russia, where after their parents (second generation) moved to Israel, in support of the establishment of a Jewish state. In this way, the main impact of the Holocaust for the seminar participants could be traced to this geopolitical change in their lives, and less so from immediate familial grief. It had reportedly affected their point of view since they were products of the Israeli educational system and it was part of the national consciousness. Two participants were Jews from Arab nations; they wrote at length about how they tried to find a sense of fitting into Israeli society while they were growing up - since they were not directly affected by the Holocaust, they tried to find stories in history of massacres against Arab-Jews in Arab countries, 'so that my family and I would have a moral justification to live in Israel'. Almost half of the participants discussed how they had been given the 'narrative of need' to have an independent and strong Jewish state from their teachers in school and from their parents at home. One Arab-Jewish participant described how there was an underlying tension to this narrative, as teachers on the one hand tried to tie the Holocaust to the establishment of Israel, and on the other hand tried to find justifications for the existence of Israel as a place of their forefathers, without linking it to the Holocaust. Some participants talked about what the Holocaust has come to mean for them today. Two participants talked about how they viewed it now as a human disaster, not only a Jewish one, and that from it we can learn how to build a better world for everybody. Another participant talked about how he now felt that the time had come for everyone to realise that 'in each of ourselves there is not only a victim but also an offender'; that since the Holocaust, Jews had perceived themselves only as victims and that this needed to change. For an Arab-Jew participant, today the fact that he is in Israel 'is a matter of fate and no more. That is why my dream is for me and my children to live with neighbours in peace, equality, and understanding.'

1. Peace 2 Talk: A case study in sharing the learning internationally. Irish Peace Centres Experiential Learning Paper No. 1, March 2010

Most of the 13 Palestinian participants spoke of the relocation and separation that al Nakba had forced upon their families. Several had family members who had gone not only to different refugee camps, but to different countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and parts of Europe. Most had immediate family members, including parents, who were forced from home towns. Participants described how this fact had led to a sense of 'disconnection' and had 'affected social and community harmony'. Many spoke of how they felt that al-Nakba was 'still happening today'; either that their parents spoke of it and it had 'collectively' affected their family and the effects had taken on psychological forms, or that the economic, social and political fallout was still being felt amongst all Palestinians. Many participants also reported in detail of the economic hardship that had ensued since al-Nakba. Since land was taken from their families, many of whom had been farmers, these people were deprived of their source of income and other resources useful for making a living, creating high unemployment and poverty. Other participants mentioned how difficult it had been politically for the Palestinian Authority to function properly, since Israeli troops occupy the refugee camps inside the 1967 territories and continually 'invade Palestinian towns and villages, conduct killings, and launch arrest campaigns'. Three participants mentioned that they have had immediate family members killed or severely injured because of al-Nakba, which also served as part of the reason for becoming involved militarily against Israel.

Here was clear evidence of the intergenerational impact of the Middle East conflict on these former combatants and prisoners. This prompted an interest in the intergenerational aspects of the Northern Ireland conflict. The interest was enhanced by the anecdotal evidence from focus groups and workshops which pointed to an intergenerational impact e.g. the widow who is now ready to move on but whose family is not (or vice versa), leading to serious restraints on her and/or the breaking up of long established relationships in the family; the RUC man whose son is led to believe that his father is a building contractor; the political prisoner whose children are told that he has gone to England to work.

Contact with support projects and a review of the literature revealed that there was little written about the situation in Northern Ireland. Academic work has been completed on the transmission and manifestation of intergenerational trauma in and around other conflict zones and traumatic events such as the Holocaust, World War II, the Vietnam War, genocides (e.g. in Cambodia and Armenia), the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe, the repression of indigenous peoples such as the Australian Aboriginal People and American Indians, and descendants of African American slaves.

To aid peace-building practitioners working in Ireland, Irish Peace Centres undertook to produce a paper on the issue as part of its Experiential Learning series. The first part of this paper will take the form of a literature review and will look at the key

themes and issues that have emerged from some of the studies on the events mentioned above. It will explore:

i. how intergenerational trauma is firstly transmitted from one generation to the next;
ii. how each generation is affected, from the initial survivors of the trauma through to the second and third generations, directly and indirectly by the trauma; and
iii. how the wider society and other key actors in families' lives may respond to these difficulties and issues.

The second part of the paper draws on data from focus groups that have taken place across Northern Ireland and the border counties with many different groups and organisations, including an inter-faith group, ex-prisoners groups, ex-security force personnel, a women's group, a victims' group, a young mothers' group, victims and ex-security force personnel in Britain, young people, a Theatre of Witness performance and a rural community group. A bibliography of the literature and the details of the focus groups are contained in appendices.

The final section will draw out some conclusions to inform the work of peace-building in the coming years.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Transmission

Bar-On's book Fear and Hope: Three Generations of the Holocaust (1995) represents the biographical reconstructions of three generations of five Israeli families, and asks the question: What are the aftereffects of the Holocaust on the descendants of survivors?

For all of us, there is some dialogue in our lives between the existential fear of the unknown and the hope for a better future; but for those whose family history is directly linked with the Holocaust, that ongoing dialogue is greatly intensified. One grandchild of a survivor explained it as 'we are like the support graft of the family.' The grandparents in the family, who directly experienced the Holocaust, also experienced an unnatural break in the continuity of the family framework, with the losses of many members of their nuclear and extended families. This feeling of 'disjunction', as Bar-On calls it, was passed on to their children and grandchildren, a disjunction that goes beyond the usual aftereffects of immigration. In addition, the emotional aftereffects such as suspicion, fear, pain, and anger have been transmitted to the next generation. This transmission has happened both in overt ways, but also in spontaneous ways that weren't even consciously premeditated.

Bar-On summarises the responsibility that the survivors had in two ways: first, they had a responsibility to remember and transmit the experience from one generation to the next, and second, to overcome what had happened and 'serve as living evidence that the Nazi attempt at annihilation had ultimately failed' (Bar-On, 1995, p.348). This could be carried out by returning to 'normal' life and conducting normal life activities, such as getting married and having children. Thus, both attitudinal responses and actions were required. However, there is tension between the first responsibility and the second: how does one remember, yet go on living, or fear the past whilst hoping in the future?

Remembering includes remembering how life was before the Holocaust, and the memory of death during it. However, the second aspect, hope, requires an act of forgetting so that those awful memories do not influence the present. Rosenthal (1989) has also articulated how the future can be threatening too; survivors may ask themselves 'did I come through it 'normal?' (Bar-On, 1995, p.349). The fear for survivors is that they have absorbed something against their will, by witnessing such acts of inhumanity, which will eventually manifest as something 'bad' in a generation or two.

Bar-On writes that while it may be assumed that these tensions can be talked through, the constantly changing reality for survivors means that at different points in their lives the balance between remembering and forgetting naturally ebbs and flows. For example, 'if during the years immediately after the Holocaust it was important to move forward at the cost of not remembering, in the ensuing years new situations have arisen, mainly concerned with raising children, that have urged a re-exploration of long-repressed feelings' (Bar-On, 1995, p.349).

Thus, bearing children and grandchildren offers the opportunity of a working-through process, as one could mourn losses while getting on with life. 'Positive experiences in societal, professional, and familial spheres, for example, may reduce fear of the future and, by doing so, enable an individual to get in touch with threatening memories from the past.' (p.349). In addition, the threatening power of the past may weaken as the generations go on, with new occasions for examining the relationship between past and present realities arising.

1.2 Storytelling

The stories that the interviewees in Bar-On's book told exemplify this process. In storytelling, there are choices; what to talk about in detail, where to be brief, what to omit. The storytellers in the book constructed and reconstructed their stories from the conflicting needs and new life experiences they had had, in order for it to sound coherent to them, and to the researchers. Bar-On also found a tension between the desire to appear consistent over time versus the need to refashion the story in light of new events and experiences that have happened in their life. Usually, however, he found that one of two poles became dominant in the overall narrative: either the desire to put it out of one's mind and go on, or the desire to preserve family continuity and crystallise exactly what happened and remember.

The transmission of the story to subsequent generations happens in three ways: in the story itself through the telling of what happened, which can influence the stories of the next generation; through the actions of one generation which the younger generation either attempts to imitate or rebel against; and/or through feelings that have not been expressed in words but which are the 'untold story'. This gap, according to Bar-On, most strongly influences the next generation because it offers the possibility of a choice to the next generation; a step in the reconstruction of the story that they can determine for themselves.

In the telling of the stories, Bar-On found evidence of filtering in the stories; both directed filtering, when a grandparent refrains from describing what happened during the Holocaust, and subconscious filtering, whereby if a child did not ask about

something, the parent did not speak of it. Active filtering was also found within the second generation. The children of a direct survivor may hold back stories from their own children because they are inundated by them. Bar-On talks about a 'double wall', whereby each side preserves both itself and the other. In one family, the second generation mother was silent; she absorbed her father's stories of heroism, but did not hear the fear he omitted, both intentionally and unintentionally. She felt as though she had no story of any interest to tell. Thus, when her children tried to make an opening in their own wall, they encountered the other side's wall. One's 'emotional window' is usually not open at exactly the same time as the other person's emotional window in their wall, stopping the conversation.

Ramzy (2006) explains this kind of filtering in a different way: she describes how group trauma is transmitted intergenerationally (consciously) and transgenerationally (unconsciously e.g. through psychological mechanisms such as identification with the traumatised aspects of the parents' psyches/personalities). Since massive trauma involves experiencing unbearably painful emotions, such as helplessness, intense fear, and terror (especially of annihilation), humiliation, and overwhelming loss, such traumatic feelings and memories tend to be discharged and transmitted through action. She warns that the action can sometimes take the form of 'hate and violence, in virulent, malignant prejudice, and in the thirst for revenge - all of which are enacted in a seemingly endless cycle of violence and war.' (Ramzy, 2006, p.308)

Lin et al (2009) write less about action as a mode of transmission and more about narrative. They explain how communication about the past trauma can emerge spontaneously in negative, conflictual, or stressful moments. This may result, for example in, 'moments when communication about traumatic, intensely personal experiences are shared in ways that suddenly connect what may seem to be otherwise unrelated subjects through anger or emotion' (p. 201). This is especially interesting, since a hallmark of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is irritability and anger. Other participants in their research described learning about familial trauma when parents argued and hurled insults at one another regarding who had suffered the most, inadvertently revealing secrets to their children: 'When him and my mom fight they yell about their experiences. It's kind of like oppression Olympics. It's like who was the more like oppressed in Cambodia.' (p.201) Similar to Bar-On's definition of filtering, Lin et al (2009) state that parents' reactions to their children's desires for communication about their familial and cultural traumatic past can be affected by the reasons for asking. Rites of passage such as birthdays, marriage, and other significant events were times, they found, when both the younger and older generations felt it was appropriate to ask some questions (e.g., Where exactly was I born? What was your wedding day like? Did I cry a lot when you carried me through the jungle as a baby?).

Dawson (2007) also focuses on narrative in his book on the transmission of memory, trauma, and the Northern Irish conflict. He describes how the storyteller can make use of storytelling techniques - for example, detailed reporting, contrast, and irony, to shape the traumatic event into narrative form to give it meaning and represent it for the recognition of others (p.138). Furthermore, Dawson argues that the traumatic experiences themselves and the memories of them are mediated through modes of cultural representation and exchange that make the personal remembering of individuals both an individual and a collective process. Through practices of storytelling within families and communities, fluid narratives emerge, with emphases constantly shifting and evolving in different social arenas. Personal stories are adapted and transformed depending on the needs and receptiveness of the listeners. Memories move between 'I' and 'We' (p.141). In the context of telling the story of Bloody Sunday, 'fuller more coherent versions of events emerged only once family members pooled their stories and gained access, directly or via media, to eyewitness accounts of the death' (p.146). As the years progressed after Bloody Sunday, it could be observed that 'shared memories of this kind also underpin a collective political identity' (p.147).

Albeck (1994) uses the term "empathic traumatization" to describe the offsprings' attempts to understand their parents' wartime experiences and pain as a means of establishing a connection with them. Similarly, Ancharoff et al (1998) describe this method for the transmission of intergenerational trauma as 'identification'. Children who live with a traumatised parent may tend towards feeling responsible for their parents' distress, and feel that if they could just be good enough, their parents would not be sad or angry. Thus, they make extreme efforts not to disturb them and take on adult roles and responsibilities - they become 'parentified' children. However, this may arouse significant anxiety in these children, as they are not prepared to handle the demands of adulthood. Emulating parental behaviour is also a way to gain acceptance from a parent who has difficulty with intimacy because of trauma (p. 265). Another method of transmission described by Ancharoff et al is 'reenactment'. Parents who have lived through traumatic experiences tend to re-enact their trauma; however, they may not be re-enacted alone. They may act in ways that parallel the original trauma, that 'teach lessons' to others, in order to test the validity of their own traumatised worldview. This can, in turn, lead to families of trauma survivors thinking and feeling and behaving as if they had been traumatised, or were the perpetrators of trauma. An example is given by Ancharoff et al of a Vietnam veteran who had experienced severe combat exposure. Upon his return, he took his three year-old son to a playground. His son was afraid to go down the slide and asked his father to catch him at the bottom. He agreed, but the father broke his promise and deliberately did not catch him. When asked why, the father explained that his child needed to learn to distrust what people told him (p. 265).

Mor (1990) offers a different but complementary view of trauma transmission. Mor suggests that the children of survivors "adopted" their parents' trauma through one of two types of parental communication. The first possible interchange was through an almost obsessive re-telling of Holocaust stories from survivor to child. The second means of transmission was accomplished through an all-consuming silence. Although the silence was meant to be protective, it led to a fearful reflection of the horror. Albeck and Mor's conceptualizations are easily integrated. The offspring learn about the Holocaust through their parents' communication and use these messages to create a bridge between themselves and their parents' past traumas. The research on modes of transmission are therefore characterised by the interplay of silence and exposure, which this paper will now discuss in more detail.

1.3 Silence and Exposure

Dekel and Goldblatt (2008) have written about intergenerational communication when the 'survivor' of the family has been diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. They found that the patterns of communication ranged from a 'conspiracy of silence' (Danieli, 1982) to overdisclosure (which was less frequent). With silence, sensitive subjects are avoided to prevent the survivor's distress from intensifying. Communication might become indirect, confusing, and ambivalent. The children detect and receive clues about the past and about their parent's present behaviour; for example, they notice that the parent is sad, cries, and sometimes even does not function, but they are incapable of understanding the meaning of what is taking place in their home (Op den Velde, 1998). In other cases, only partial details of the traumatic experience are disclosed to the child. Though parents may avoid talking directly to children, children sometimes still overhear conversations between older adults as they reflect and reminisce about the past; a 'partial' silence so to speak.

Ancharoff et al (1998) have also described how silence can communicate traumatic messages as powerfully as words. Family members may be empathetically attuned to the distress of survivor parents; to avoid arousing further emotional distress, they may make efforts to avoid anything that they believe would trigger their discomfort. Families collude to maintain silences, which can inhibit discussion of sensitive topics; the breach of silence may result in arguments, scapegoating, or simply changing the subject (p.263). Children may subsequently feel anxiety related to the anticipation of their parent's symptoms, and by not knowing the full story, they may have dire fantasies about what has been uncommunicated to them. Dekel and Goldblatt (2008) warn however that lack of knowledge or partial knowledge can lead to imaginary completion of the missing details, and the made-up story may be even more frightening than the real one.

On the other hand, overdisclosure, for example of graphic details, can be horrifying for children especially if delivered in a flat, nonchalant way. Parents may feel that they are preparing their children for the realities of life, to survive in a world where danger is omnipresent. Ancharoff et al recommend that parents' traumatic information be delivered in doses that permit the children to listen and receive parental support; however, the ability of parents to confide appropriately about their trauma depends on how they cope with their symptoms themselves (p.264).

Following sociocultural trauma such as genocide (see Lin et al, 2009), silence not only surrounds the survivors but often spreads far beyond to their families, communities, and larger society. Even after migration away from the setting where the original trauma occurred, refugee communities often have little voice or power on their own within new social settings, and they typically receive little public or civic recognition for what they have survived. Refugee survivors often resist talking about their experiences, even with their own children. As time passes, those who were refugees themselves and those who were raised by refugee parents typically have not communicated with each other about the meaning of trauma in their family story.

The burden of such a dominant sociocultural silence means that questions such as 'Why us?' And: 'Are my loved ones still alive somewhere?' cannot be answered. Without either social acknowledgment or bilingual, bicultural care and support, the older generation is typically left to create its own narratives of survival that can then be passed on to their children, especially if those children grow up in an adopted country. Meanwhile, the younger generation is typically taught not to engage with the past and may only learn about family legacies of war through the older generation's criticisms, accidental outbursts, and overheard conversations (Lin, 2005). Personal memories remain individually isolated and unacknowledged by the larger society. This leaves the younger generation without a larger context that can connect identity, family, and community with history, culture, and society. Lindt (1998) gives the example of children of Nazi collaborators. For them, discussing the family history after the war was a complete taboo (Lindt, p.168). The discovery of the family secret at a later age forced children to struggle to come to terms with their parents' choices. Many broke their relationship with their parents, but for many, the loyalty-conflict was particularly difficult. While the loyalty of children towards parents is always a reality, the guilt feelings towards Nazi victims are also strong. Lindt explains that for these children, developing an identity in these families was very difficult: 'the common phrase “I got that from my parents” is an impossible utterance for children of collaborators. They have to check carefully everything that is received at home' (p. 168).

Hunter-King (1998) has noted that the level of silence in the home of survivor-generation parents and their children may affect levels of loyalty to their government as well. Hunter-King found that those children with whom their mothers did not share information from the very beginning of the time when their father went missing in action during the Vietnam War developed strong antigovernment stances as adults themselves. She found that mothers who were open and talked with their children about their missing fathers and who they were have not been as distrustful of the government (Hunter-King, p. 252).

As time goes on, breaking any silence that involves personal or familial traumas, for better or worse, can challenge long-held understandings and relations. The mother, brother, aunt, or grandfather who survived the betrayal and deprivation inherent in, for example, the Cambodian genocide, risk negatively affecting their own mental health or self-image and negatively affecting relationships with children and other family members because breaking the silence may reopen severe psychological wounds that remain unhealed. This may destabilize relationships with loved ones as hidden identities or shifting dynamics become more prominent. Thus, community members may silence themselves and others about shared trauma to avoid potentially difficult circumstances, including a re-experiencing of the trauma itself (Lin, 2005).

Cultural rules therefore may also affect the extent to which it is talked about, as well as wanting to avoid opening wounds. Lin et al (2009) describe how in Asian-American culture, there is the norm that speaking of evil is not good karma; the darkness of the past should not be brought into the present and allowed to contaminate the future. It is also deemed disrespectful for children to question their elders. These key characteristics can exacerbate the silence. Arlene Healey's chapter in Stories in Conflict: Towards Understanding and Healing (2008) highlights the pervasiveness of the cultural silence that existed during the height of the Northern Irish conflict. As a social worker in Belfast, she witnessed children being taken into state care because of the threat of paramilitary punishment beatings or shootings; 'yet the system stayed silent…The silence extended to all levels of society in Northern Ireland from the street to the Department of Health, the universities, the health professionals; no one acknowledged what was happening.' (p.55). In this kind of a vacuum, writes Healey, the needs of those suffering from trauma due to the conflict remained unseen and unheard. It was only with the advent of the peace process in the 1990s that those in the voluntary sector began to speak out against the silence (p.56). Similar processes were taking place within families. Healey quotes from families who described themselves as 'families at war with themselves', needing their own 'mini peace agreement' (p.57). She highlights that it is even more difficult for families to describe the impact of the trauma within their family, when they live in a society that is dominated by silence about such traumas. Another study by Logue et al (2007) found

that Protestants who lived in the Border Counties in Ireland felt culturally and socially excluded, although this was perpetrated by its own 'keep your head down' attitude. Maintaining silence was also articulated as 'the Protestant way' (p.49).

Employing avoidance as a strategy for too long, such as turning off the TV every time the traumatic event is dealt with, can however lead to the construction of an isolated or insular world defined by multiple fears and maintained at the expense of one's social relationships. Parents in such circumstances, in particular, risk alienating their children not only from themselves but from significant dimensions of family and community history that have shaped the present-day context for both parents and children (Lin et al, 2009). Cross-generational communication of this information may be vital to later-generations who seek to understand their own identities in relation to the individual and collective legacies of their families and community. A focus group study conducted with ex-combat prisoners in Northern Ireland corroborates this point. Hall's (2009) compilation of ex-prisoner opinions touches on the effect the Northern Irish conflict has had on the second generation, the children of those who lived through it, and the need to talk about how the conflict has changed. Some of the ex-prisoners articulate their fears that the next generation see them and want to emulate them: 'They have this idea that they want to be like the ex-combatant they live among'; 'I have a nephew…I heard him a couple of times coming out with that stuff: I'd love to fight for my country and die for my country'; 'we have no role models for them to look up to…they want respect from within the gang; or some of them want notoriety' (p. 25-26). However, this is partly due to the fact that they have not been exposed to accurate memories of what the conflict was like; the ex-prisoners stress the role of education and the responsibility of the older generation in explaining to young people in Northern Ireland why a return to violence is not a desirable option: 'They don't understand: Why was it alright last time [to stone police vehicles], but not alright now?'; 'Some of the young GAA lads [in the club] will start singing IRA songs, and I just feel sorry for them. But then it's partly our fault. It's not that you deliberately romanticise the conflict or deliberately romanticise prison - it's human nature to remember the good times and not the bad times'; 'we need to tell them: see before you do anything, try and think it through as to why you would do it'; 'the engagement with young people…should include pictures of the effects of the conflict; pictures of people after they were shot, after they were blew up, to say to them: this is what happens when you go out and do these things. We want to hit them with the reality of what it was like and why we don't want them to go down that road.'(Ibid; p. 30)

Lin et al (2009) describe how, despite having many reasons to be silent about their own trauma, many parents also know well that aspects of the Khmer Rouge genocide are inherently connected to a broader Cambodian historical and cultural background that many strongly value. They felt confused about how to compose the information

into a more coherent narrative (Lin, 2005). Again, this leads us back to Bar-On's explanation - the tension between hope and fear, the future and past, is what characterises this type of intergenerational communication.

1.4. The First Generation - the Survivor Generation

Jelin and Kaufman (2004) identify various layers within the subjectivity of the survivor generation, where memories exist as 'fragmented and contradictory' feelings, thoughts, and reflections (quoted in Dawson, 2007, p.107). This means that for the survivors, the 'construction of memory takes on different forms' (Dawson, 2007, p.99); it exists not only as factual eyewitness testimony of what happened, but 'as feelings that are remembered now...as thoughts and reflections about what one has experienced, considering the moment in the life course when this happened, and one's current thoughts about that past; [and] as reflections about one's place in the world, about one's social responsibility' (p.105). Dawson notes that what the first generation say and remember about the events, and how they tell their stories, reveal the 'psychic marks' (p.135) of their trauma. There is often a psychic resistance to internalising it, or an effort towards 'killing the emotion' of the psychic marks (p.136). Some survivors also remember the event(s) with a sense of disassociation - 'when I think back on it now, it was nearly like being on drugs' (Hegarty in O'Brien, 2002, p.38). Dorahy et al's (2008) study found a connection between PTSD symptoms and feelings of interpersonal disconnection (p. 41, 44). Those who had been treated at the Trauma Resource Centre in Belfast and had reported higher dissociation symptoms also reported seeing themselves in more negative ways (guilt, shame), feeling like they could not deal adequately with high levels of emotion, and had greater difficulties relating to others.

Many studies from many academic disciplines outline the horrors and difficulties endured by the survivor generation; however, not many detail the intricacies of what home life was like for them. Dawson (2007) reports the sense of powerlessness (a component of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) felt by the families who had members killed during Bloody Sunday. This emotion is focused on regret about the contact that was never made and the help that was never given; on 'lost opportunities to intervene' (p. 130). Families' grieving processes were also disjointed and interrupted: maybe by being told by someone who was a stranger, or children, that their relative was hurt or killed, so they didn't know whether to believe it; seeing sealed coffins at wakes; hearing others' sympathy and grief for long periods of time after the event (p. 127-140). Hayes (2000, reported in Dawson, 2007, p.140) reports a woman's story of how her mother did not leave the house for weeks afterwards because she could not bear to hear condolences.

Maureen Hetherington (2008) notes the positive and negative effects of a 'victim mentality' on families and relatives in the context of Northern Ireland, which is promoted by individuals and organisations through the public recognition of victims within their own communities. 'When the event is acknowledged and is incorporated into a communal history, loved ones may be held up as heroes or martyrs, thus giving a purpose to their death. However…victims may go through re-traumatisation of the painful memories and some, who prefer to mourn quietly, are caught up in the 'public' mourning. Some victims experience being 'stuck' within a victim mentality and feel they cannot move beyond it; to do so would be seen to be disloyal to their family and the deceased.'(p. 40)

Danieli (1985) suggests that survivor parents attempt to teach their children how to survive in the event of further persecution; thus, they inadvertently transmit their own wartime experiences. Children of survivors have been observed acting out Holocaust survival behaviour adopted by their parents and becoming highly sensitive to Holocaust imagery during anniversaries of their parents' trauma (Axelrod, Schnipper, & Rau, 1980; Krell, 1982). The offspring literally maintain their familial ties by integrating their parents' experiences. Freyborg (1980) and others have found that overprotective and controlling parenting can be another characteristic of the first generation. Some studies have found that they are limited in their ability to inspire a smooth transition to separation and individuation in their offspring, highly expectant of the aspirations of their children, and burdened with traumatic memories which they pass on to the next generation (Freyberg, 1980; Halik, Rosenthal, & Pattison, 1990; Mor, 1990; Rosenman & Handelsman, 1990). In contrast however, Bar-On (1995) spoke with one family who, while the mother exhibited this style of parenting, the father exhibited indifference to matters of discipline and control of the second generation. The commonality between them is that residual fear can be traced in both approaches to parenting; both fear of the past happening again and fear of the unknown in the future. A document written by the Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation (2006) also notes this point: since the threat to RUC personnel in Northern Ireland was ever present on and off duty, some officers did not even tell their children what they did for a living as a basic safety precaution (p.4).

For soldiers upon returning from a tour of duty, new problems often arise for the adjusting family unit. Bernstein's work (1998) on the families of World War II soldiers has documented these difficulties. Marital conflicts developed as family members had grown more independent and assertive in the absence of the male figurehead. Feelings that the family did not understand the war experience could also lead to interpersonal difficulties via outbursts and violence, for which divorce could be viewed as a solution (p.120). Spouses who were unable to display their own feelings sometimes blamed themselves, leading to guilt and depression. Qualitative interviews with survivors and victims of the Northern Irish conflict living in Great

Britain, both military and civilian, conducted by the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Trust in Warrington (2003) have highlighted the difficulties that families had to 'maintain calm and stable environments, to avoid violence and aggression and to maintain solid relationships' (p. 63-64). One ex-military victim describes 'blowing [his] top'; another describes having to explain scars to a potential girlfriend; other ex-military victims describe a feeling that they just didn't 'fit-in' with family life. Wives of ex-servicemen describe how they took on the strong, supportive roles in the family, taking little support themselves. A father of an ex-military victim describes his sense of loss of his family line - that he not only lost his son, but also potential grandchildren from that son as well.

First-hand accounts of first-generation survivor stories in the Northern Irish context are also in a report by the Oglaigh Naisunta Na hEireann Teoranta (Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen and Women). Forty former soldiers with the Irish Defence Forces and supplemental interviews with 6 family members were carried out in 2007. The research set out to capture their stories and identify how their health and wellbeing were affected by border duty during the conflict. Many soldiers lived amongst the local community, and married local women; some into Republican families. Almost half of all the soldiers interviewed for the study found the distance between their homes and station on the border to be a difficulty. Some interviewees had trouble getting time off for leave, and when they did, it was frequently cancelled at short notice. It could also be difficult getting in touch with family members to let them know what was happening, particularly at the early stages of the conflict when not all households had telephones. Sometimes, if a major incident was taking place they could be confined to the barracks for an indefinite period of time. The long hours of duty, being frequently away from home, arriving home late after the children had gone to bed, and irritable behaviour as a result of fatigue (or possible PTSD) often contributed to domestic difficulties. There are accounts in this research of partners who didn't understand the demands and responsibilities being placed on the soldiers, especially those who had not come from a military background. “Our wives thought we volunteered for duties, rather than the fact that we had to do it.” “The long duties could make you cranky and I found it difficult to relate to my kids as I was so exhausted.” Other family members commented: “It affected the family's social life as, due to tiredness, he was not in any form to go out socialising. It was a regular occurrence that leave was cancelled at the last minute, which resulted in a lot of stress for family members.” “The army did not see the family as important in my husband's wellbeing. There was stress within the family. He was not able to talk about work.” The traumatic events and stress affected the individual's relationship with his family, sometimes at a cost to that relationship. Other strains on family life could be reflected in different ways: “I once lined up my kids to ask who stole the money from the mantelpiece. My children saw me as a disciplinarian and it made me aware of how the system in the army had brainwashed me.” One soldier in the study also spoke of

how the stresses and strains resulted in domestic violence. The link between stress and domestic violence has been widely documented (see Beckham et al, 2000, Novaco and Chemtob, 1998, Taft et al, 2005 for examples).

The discussion by an ex-combatant group in Northern Ireland comprising of ex-Irish National Liberation Army, ex-Official Irish Republican Army and ex-Ulster Defence Association prisoners (see Michael Hall, 2009) also highlights the intergenerational impact of the Northern Irish conflict in the first or surviving generation especially. They describe the detrimental impact that being in prison had on their personal relationships: 'In prison having a girl has a big effect on your mind. You're in there thinking: what's she doing, who's she with? I have seen a lot of friends in jail going through a hard time with their girlfriends; a mate of mine hanged himself in jail over it.' (p. 9). One ex-prisoner spoke of how, because he went to jail, he did not see his children again; his mother also 'was dead against me getting involved…when I went to jail she disowned me.' Others describe the relief of family members that you were in jail, and not vulnerable to attack on the streets. One ex-prisoner described how most of his seven brothers were also involved in the Republican movement, and the anger he felt at seeing the effect on his mother: 'It deteriorated my mum in a way because she knew in the back of her mind that one day she actually might get one of us back in a box. And just to see my mum go like that there, it really bugged me, and I said no, I'm not standing for this. I blamed the Brits for the whole situation' (p. 12).

An information resource by O'Hagan (2009) highlights the link between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the experiences of the first generation from the Northern Irish conflict: 'Even if not directly impacted by violence, it was common for people to have to do things like think about which route to take to avoid a check point, or which channel to put on television so that children did not see the latest graphic reports…Consequently, since every person has been exposed to traumatic and stressful events just by living through the Troubles, it is not a far stretch to believe that every person could be at risk for developing some side effects to exposure…[they] can experience restrictions in their ability to experience emotions even without other symptoms of PTSD. Oftentimes someone will find that they feel emotionally numb after a traumatic experience, but never seek help because other symptoms are not present that would interfere with daily activities in a significant enough way to cause the individual to seek help and/or treatment. Also, because so many other people have experienced similar events, such as is the case with the Troubles, people do not feel their "problems" are serious enough to seek help. ' (p. 7). Muldoon et al (2005, quoted in Healey, 2008) found that one in five people in Northern Ireland have suffered multiple experiences relating to the Troubles and that one in ten have been bereaved as a result of the Troubles. From that sample, it was estimated that 12% of the Northern Ireland population were diagnosable with PTSD, as well as 6% of those within the Border Counties (in Healey, 2008, p. 59).

Figley (quoted in Bernstein, 1998) has also coined the term 'survivor's response', a term used to describe the mentality of soldiers while on tour. This centres on a sense of alienation and depersonalisation as a coping device to manage their sense of isolation. It prevents emotional attachment and reduces the fear of loss. The soldier relied upon denial, suppression and repression as part of this mechanism. This has enabled some veterans to view their experiences in the best possible light; for others, feelings of guilt and anger are manifest and become worse with time. When returning to their families, the impact of this resulted in behaviours such as compulsive work habits (more than 8 hours per day), and avoiding close emotional relationships with children and spouses, and social interaction in the community (Bernstein, 1998, p.121). Retirement for many caused an increase in withdrawal and hostile behaviour (p.122).

The question is now: how were these tendencies passed on to the succeeding generations? Dekel and Goldblatt (2008) have explored this question in their review of PTSD transmission in survivor families. Several studies that they quote have examined family functioning in families of veterans. Ruscio, Weathers, King, & King (2002) found that numbing symptoms of PTSD had the strongest negative impact on the parent-child relationship. The authors suggest that emotional numbing, detachment, and avoidance may directly impact on the veteran's parenting ability by diminishing the capability to interact with the child and develop a meaningful relationship. Normal development in childhood and adolescence requires regulating distance/closeness from the parents (Laible, Carlo, & Raffaelli, 2000) to enable formation of a separate identity (Grotevant & Cooper, 1986). Fathers who have difficulty regulating distance/closeness from their traumatic memories might also find it hard to properly regulate distance/closeness from their children. The father's physical presence and psychological absence or ambiguous loss (Boss, 1999), as well as the difficulty involved in understanding and explaining his behaviour, might cause lack of appreciation and disappointment among the children. Symptoms of hyper-arousal, a low frustration threshold and low self-control can lead to the use of verbal and physical violence as a means of solving problems; all of which are symptoms that have been exemplified in the first-hand accounts described here.

1.5. The Second Generation - Children of Survivors

Bar-On's research (1995) explores how the second generation felt 'small': there was evidence of intense admiration of their parents' ability to withstand suffering. At times, this led to them searching out forms of suffering themselves, in order to better understand their parents. The second generation veered between admiring and simultaneously criticising the way their parents worried about them, or by contrast, were indifferent to them.

Dawson (2007) describes how the compounding of emotional effects within the second generation occurred most potently in circumstances where children witnessed the transformation of their parents and experienced the loss of their emotional support and guidance. As mentioned in section 1.2 of this paper, the second generation children often went on to assume a parent-like responsibility in looking after one another and sometimes their devastated parents. Under such intense pressure, families could either rally around for support and try to ensure that everybody pulled together, or fall apart, each 'fighting to understand it in their own way' (Eileen Doherty, in McCann, 1992, p.224). Similarly, Bernstein (1998) discusses the intergenerational impact of World War II prisoners of war who returned to their families. He writes that while husbands, fathers, sons and so on were missing, in combat, or prisoners, there was a 'war on the home front' (p.120). Families vied between anticipation of loss and hope for return. The impact on their sons and daughters and other family members was a need for role changes for compensation; for the survival of the family unit. There were also long-term negative effects on the relationships that the second generation of Vietnam War-era Missing In Action soldiers developed with others. Hunter-King (1998) observed a range of difficulties, including fears of loss and abandonment and a resistance to be dependent on others in any way, in case that person disappeared too. Others mentioned 'an overfatalistic attitude toward life'; 'My Mother and other relatives put [my Dad] on a pedestal. By the time you're grown, no mate (or you) can ever compare to the “God” they've become!' (p.249) Sons of fathers who were missing described the difficulty of suddenly becoming 'the man of the house', with new (sometimes self-imposed) responsibilities heaped upon them (p.250). Others mourned the lack of a male role-model and male companionship, especially if the extended family did not include many uncles or a grandfather. However, the majority of children mentioned the fact that their situation brought them closer to their mothers and other siblings as a result. Hall's publications on children of prisoners in Northern Ireland detail the short and long-term disruptions that it brought to daily life in the home, in both physical and emotional terms, and the tension and resentment that it created. This included ongoing searches in the home, a lack of money, a lack of explanations about what happened, and difficulties and misunderstandings when the absent parent returned (Hall, 2000, and Hall, 2005).

Healey (2008) describes a case study of a family of five children whose father was killed on Bloody Friday in 1972. The youngest daughter of the family was six years of age the day he was killed; her brothers and sisters were all much older than she was at the time. 'She felt she was always treated differently. Her siblings had already left home when her father was killed. From the age of six until she married, she remained at home with her mother…They thought she was privileged to have their mother all to herself. Her experience, however, was very different. She emotionally supported her mother and her memory was of being a very lonely child.'(p. 65). As a child, she

had also believed that her father 'had lost all his limbs…any programme that showed dismemberment caused profound upset.' Now, as a mother herself, she reported how important it was that she taught her daughters to be self-reliant and independent, 'in case I die' (p.66).

Shabad (1993) takes a more psychoanalytical approach, detailing parenting/childhood rivalries. He explores how the second generation may have a 'sense of being cheated out of one's rightful childhood' (p.71). After a lifetime of caring and working for others, these individuals eventually may begin to feel that they have compromised their participation in their own lives. Shabad explains that they may harbour unconscious yearnings to live out a childhood of which they feel cheated and to which they now feel entitled with their own children. Becoming a parent, one may view the parent-child relationship as a tempting opportunity to re-enact and undo the trauma, and through this undoing, to grab back a childhood felt to be one's just due. One may bitterly begrudge the passing on of a better life to children who are unconsciously seen as rivals for the experience of a "new beginning." Where once they put their own wishes behind their parent's wishes, they may now subconsciously target their own children with the same aspects of submission.

Some second generation Bloody Sunday survivors described difficulties because of the ripple-effects of the trauma on their family: for a brother of Michael Kelly, who was shot during Bloody Sunday, the impact on relatives was as emotionally devastating as the bereavement: 'I am very, very, very bitter. The bitterness stems from not having [Michael] but also what happened to my mother and my family. When it affected my mother, it affected me deeply'. His mother, Kathleen Kelly, was severely traumatised after Bloody Sunday. (Anonymous, quoted from Hayes (2000) in Dawson, (2007), p. 141). Hunter-King (1998) explores the difficulties for families whose fathers were missing in action (MIA) during the Vietnam War. For some, the mother was able to eventually accept the possibility that the MIA husband was dead, and perhaps remarry, become career-focused, or start a new life. Some children did not learn until later that the man they thought was their father was not. In-laws sometimes found that they could not forgive women who 'abandoned' the memory of their son. Thus, some children not only lost their father, but their grandparents too (p.253). Other wives continued to wait and hope that the father was still alive and would eventually return from possible capture. For all families, there was a 'state of ambiguous, unresolved grief…figuratively 'stuck in time' and unable to go forward' (p.244). Hunter-King quotes from three family members who portray this difficulty: 'The feeling of frustration and depression of not knowing where my Dad is or if he's alive…It's very difficult to have your life revolve around someone who may not even be alive'; 'It's an issue you don't want to die, but you wish it would'; 'I have difficulty putting it behind me since it's an open issue'. Some children whose mothers were totally immersed in MIA activities and campaigning felt as though they had lost both parents (p.253).

Matters of identity have been picked up in many studies as a key issue and area of confusion for the second generation of survivors. A study conducted by ITENIBA (2007; p. 27) found that national identity is still important for young people as well as the adult generation in the construction of their identity. However, it was those in their sample who were brought up during the violence in Northern Ireland (25-50 years old) that were most likely to be careful of the words they chose to describe it and insist that nationality is not important - the youngest and oldest generations in the sample often slid between religious and national identities when describing themselves, especially Northerners and Southern Catholics, for example, speaking in terms of 'Catholic' or 'Protestant' when asked to describe national identity. The young people in the ITENIBA sample of Northern and Southern Irish Catholics and Protestants described how important their families were in influencing the way they saw the world and their identities, more than explicit national narratives, histories, or ideological constructions (p.30-31). Issues of identity amongst second generation Armenian genocide survivors have been studied by Kupelian et al (1998). When asked 'do you feel different from other people because of the genocide experience of your parents?' the majority of the second generation (and third generation) answered yes (p.200). In addition, the second generation did not insist as much as the third-generation on Turkish accountability for the Armenian genocide. They expressed feelings of anger, loss for their homeland and family, immense pride that Armenian culture could not be extinguished, and a determination to ensure the perpetration of Armenian heritage and culture (p.200). The first and second generations together made special efforts into maintaining group cohesion and passing a sense of ethnic identity to the younger generation.

Raphael et al (1998) relate the forced separation of Australian Aboriginal children from their parents and the effects this had on male children especially (p.332). The loss of father also meant the loss of initiation into mature malehood and role models, in contrast to the female's ongoing primacy in domestic and child rearing settings and their greater financial security with welfare payments. When culture is not transmitted because of such separations, it is likely that a sense of uncertainty and strain will occur. They also describe studies that have found high correlations between absence of the father and absence of traditional Aboriginal teachings with rates of attempted suicide, mental health disorders, and substance abuse. There are further problems with identity development that result from moving into Aboriginal society again when one has been raised as non-Aboriginal (p.333). Duran et al (1998, p.346) have found similar problems amongst American Indian peoples. Rates of suicide and alcoholism are much higher on Native reservations than among the US population as a whole (suicide is 70.3 per 100,000 compared to 11.6 per 100,000, and the rate of deaths due to alcoholism is 4.8 times the average). However, rates are much lower in pueblos, tribes, and Native families in cities where their traditions are workable and viable (p.347). This indicates that had the culture been allowed to remain intact, these

devastating social problems would be experienced to the same extent. Raphael et al (1998) have also gathered evidence to show that there is an association between being abused and neglected as a child and becoming an abusive adult. Many victims of abuse grow up to have difficulties with parenting. Rates of child abuse among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are much higher than for all children (15.2 per 1,000 as opposed to 5.7 per 1,000) (p.334). Aboriginal people themselves have identified the pattern of loss of parenting skills for the 'stolen generation' (p. 335).The inability of many women experiencing childhood separation to care for their own children has led to these children being passed on to other family members to be cared for, especially grandmothers, aunts, and other women in traditional roles of support for childbirth and child care.

Feelings of isolation and social stigma have also been picked up by some studies. Tatara (1998) describes the social stigma resulting from the fear of the genetic effects of radiation for the second generation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivors, which engenders further psychological consequences. They may avoid being open about their family history for fear of being rejected. This further increases feelings of isolation and the additional burden of trying to maintain secrecy. This stigma, as well as the 'domino' effect of trauma created by the low-earning power of parents with physical disabilities stemming from the bombing, has resulted in the second generation being limited in gaining credentials and skills necessary to raise their own socio-economic status.

Lindt (1998) writes about the isolation faced by children of members of the Dutch Nazi party and the challenges they faced to integrate back into society after World War II. After the German defeat in the Netherlands, most collaborators fled to Germany, but those who remained were arrested (up to 100,000 people, 23,000 of who were women). The arrest of one or both parents meant that many children were interned in camps or brought to children's homes and foster homes. It has been reported that in the camps and care homes, conditions were often substandard, with no heating and with unqualified personnel. Contacts with parents were almost completely broken off, although some were reunited after internment. Hofman (1988, quoted in Lindt, p.167) remarks that in the Netherlands, children of collaborators were identified by others with their parents. In doing this, children of collaborators themselves feel that they are not entitled to be treated as equals in Dutch society; they are alienated because of mistakes for which they are not guilty (p.167). They experienced stigma in schools, in job applications, and were fired from jobs because of their background. Their constant feeling of guilt and shame caused social defencelessness. Montessori (1987, quoted in Lindt, p.170) reports that the long-term effects of the children's experiences are dissociation of emotions and repression of hatred. This blocks their ability to understand themselves, and leaves a resulting feeling of inferiority. According to Donkersloot (1988, quoted in Lindt, 1998), the main

component of the children of collaborators is anxiety and a vague feeling of being 'different' and 'wrong'. They live in a world they experience as threatening, and are in constant fear of failure; they try to avoid making mistakes or being politically incorrect. Similarly, Figley (1985, quoted in Bernstein, 1998, p.120) found that children of WWII prisoners of war have been observed to display 'secondary traumatization'. This can be characterised by children sharing and exhibiting their parent's trauma - through the experience of nightmares, low self-esteem, and feelings of vulnerability. Bernstein notes that sons of POWs and of Holocaust survivors were found to have become more sensitive to criticism, and daughters to manifest a greater degree of depression than control groups in an empirical study.

Klain (1998) has written about the different types of emotions that are transmitted from generation to generation. One of the most frequent ones in the context of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s was hate and rage, accompanied by aggression and destruction. Klain notes that the wave of hatred between the ethnic groups overflowed in churches, cultural monuments, cemeteries, and in homes (p. 288). A sense of the need for revenge was also transmitted. The Serbs lamented that they had always been endangered, and always lost at the negotiating table; the Croatian feeling was of neglect and injustice between the two world wars (p.289). The victim's revenge is, according to Klain, one of the hardest blows to the victim by his or her persecutor and tormentor, because in this way the victim becomes like him or her. Guilt and shame are also transmitted; guilt because of what happened to them (or others); shame because of the humiliation of rape and torture. Klain also notes the patriarchal nature of families in the countries of the former Yugoslavia and the connection of this to authoritarian tendencies. The transmission from one generation to the next of the father' authority as untouchable has left family members unable to move out of the group, with the view that the 'other' is dangerous and hostile. Subsequently, both Serbian and Croatian leading groups have demonstrated a penchant for supporting leaders with authoritarian styles. (p.291). Distrust has also been noted as an emotion which has been passed down through the generations in Northern Ireland. Katy Radford, quoted in the Rural Community Network's April 2009 publication, 'Sharing over separation - a rural perspective', reflects on how social segregation in Northern Ireland has produced considerable fear and immobility in rural areas. The legacy of the conflict, as well as the separatism and brutality in border areas, 'saw an entrenchment and polarisation of views that has left an inter-generational legacy of mistrust and inflexibility of the 'other'.

Rosenheck and Fontana (1998) describe a variety of studies that note how the intergenerational impact on the second generation in families may vary depending on the political context of the conflict their family members were involved in. They discuss that whilst many fathers returning from World War II had severe trauma, they fought for a popular cause, succeeded in its objectives and were publicly praised and

honoured when they returned home (p.238). Their children, aware of the honour of their service, typically had little idea of the horror of war. This is contrasted against the families of Holocaust survivors - they had no proud celebratory homecoming and often felt alienated from authorities. Hunter-King (1998) also writes about how the unpopularity of the Vietnam War also posed problems for the children and families of men who served. She notes that while the children were very proud of their fathers, some had 'an underlying, inexplicable shame that they themselves did not understand' - the protests against the war, which some of their friends were participating in, stated that the war was illegal and thus, some felt that the soldiers deserved to be captured (p.245). Some reported a growing sense of mistrust of the government as they got older, or a sense that the government had deserted their fathers.

It is important to remember that intergenerational transmission of knowledge about conflict does not stem only from within the family. A report by Magill et al (2009; p. 2) found that children and young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Northern Ireland described their main sources of information about what happened during the war/Troubles as: adults (parents/grandparents/teachers); personal experience (depending on age); Media; and School (subjects such as history, religion, politics, personal development). In Northern Ireland, the majority of respondents in the 24-25 age group believed that the Troubles were not adequately addressed when they were at school. In addition, the young people in the sample felt that schools could use more interactive teaching methodologies in order to further their understanding, such as inviting guest speakers and taking pupils on visits to war/conflict-affected areas (p.3).

1.6. The Third Generation - Grandchildren of Survivors

Similar to the second generation of survivors, Lin et al (2009) found that the younger generation was aware of the risk that communication may hurt the survivor generation. They approach such intimate moments with a mixture of guilt, awe, fear of causing injury, and distress regarding how to integrate various revelations shared by their elders into their family relationships, sense of self, and understanding of the world (Lin, 2005). Furthermore, particularly among families who avoid referring to the past, children may experience and transfer the older generation's avoidance and discomfort to themselves. Furthermore, young adults may feel so uncomfortable from witnessing their parents' previous displays of negative emotion in conversations about the past that they feel no desire to pursue further communication about it, at least within that developmental time and space. Family distance also resulted within other families because of the effects of silence. Some participants, for example, expressed that they felt so little connection to their elders and to Cambodian culture that they had little desire to know more about their own families' histories.

In contrast, Bar-On (1995) found that the third generation were characterised by being very integrated into their larger extended families, and several spoke of their feelings that while friends may change, 'family is safe and steady' (p.347). This renewed confidence in the family framework may be seen as a response to the disruption in their family's continuity, and to the fragmented lives of their grandparents.

Many of the young people in Bar-On's study spoke warmly of their grandparents, and were positive about their futures. One young person who was in the army at the time of interview combined the expression of emotional closeness to her grandmother with necessary distancing, feeling unable 'to really help her, to compensate for what she lost.' (p.345). They do not mention their parents' contribution to this emotional relationship, but as Bar-On states, it would be difficult to understand how such a respectful relationship could occur without the thoughtful example of their parents.

Some of the young people felt on the periphery of society; one expressed a fear of failure, and whilst she is very successful in her achievements, is mainly concerned with how others esteem them. Those young people whose grandparents were not “real” survivors of the Holocaust and who immigrated to Israel from North Africa, felt themselves to be struggling for their place, something which may have been transmitted from their grandparents, which was never worked through. One young person empathised with their grandmother's difficulties, while for another, her grandmother represents what she is afraid of becoming: 'she destroys everything around her...she doesn't try to do anything with herself.' Kupelian et al (1998) found that the third generation of Armenian genocide survivors viewed their identity and place in society with a sense of hybridity; the third generation response to culture was found to be more externalised than their parents'; instead of a focus on maintaining Armenian culture and heritage, 'their focus is on a newer paradigm of American freedom and respect for human rights that allows a more open appeal for redress of injustices', and were more likely to view themselves as Armenian-Americans (p.201).

Finally, Bar-On explores how the working-through process for the third generation needs to come at a pace that is suitable for each individual's maturing processes; one young girl talked about how a school trip to Poland was very difficult for her; she was not able to deal emotionally with what she saw there. In contrast, another teenager made a trip to Poland with her grandmother, a family trip that emerged organically, based on personal curiosity. This trip resulted in a stronger sense of closeness to her grandmother, with her grandmother able to tell her stories while being there that she had not felt able to tell her own children.

Lazar et al's study (2008) asked grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and other young people with no familial connection to the Holocaust to evaluate the impact of the Holocaust on the self, their family, and society. Whilst other studies have used in-

depth qualitative interviews to gauge subtle psychological differences, this study used questionnaires. The results however suggest that the Holocaust is perceived as a cultural trauma for young Jewish-Israelis regardless of their family background. Nevertheless, the authors found that themes of 'the need for Jewish solidarity' and 'the threat of annihilation' were more salient among the young people whose families were of Sephardic origin, not those who were European and directly affected the Holocaust. They explain this as possibly due to the effects of the dynamics of identity construction and the 'rediscovery' of their Sephardic roots. The Sephardic descendants also wrote more about how the Holocaust had shaped their personal value systems than grandchildren of descendants. Again, there may be a need for grandchildren to distance themselves from the psychological influence of the Holocaust and an opposite need for the Sephardic group, who may be looking for ways to connect the past Jewish trauma to their present identity.

Young people whose families were not directly affected by the Holocaust did not see the Holocaust as having an enduring impact on their personal and family lives. Some grandchildren of survivors did however also claim this, while other grandchildren said the Holocaust impacted them and family members. There are two processes at work here for survivors. One is Paradoxical Relevance, conceptualised by Chaitin (2002, 2003). Those grandchildren who said it had no impact had little factual knowledge concerning their families' experiences of the Holocaust. One reason for this may be the 'bond of silence' found by Rosenthal in her study of families of Holocaust survivors (1989), and explored earlier in this paper. The second process could be that these young adults grew up in families in which memories of the past have been shared by survivors with their grandchildren, keeping the manifest memory of the trauma quite alive (Bar-On, 1995), i.e. exposure to memories.

In the context of Northern Ireland, Healey (2008) believes that the third generation of survivors from that conflict has already emerged: 'Given that the conflict is Northern Ireland is considered to have started in 1969, it is now almost 40 years later…we are certainly seeing children from the third generation struggling to come to terms with the impact on their families of trauma that happened to their grandparents more than 30 years ago' (p.58). How the third generation receive, transmit, and are impacted by intergenerational trauma, are areas of research that are yet to be fully investigated in Northern Ireland.

1.7. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders in the Second and Third Generations

Dekel and Goldblatt (2008) have written extensively on PTSD transmission from the first generation in a conflict to the succeeding generations. They estimate that under

the current criteria for a diagnosis of PSTD, 52.5% of the sample of Jewish concentration camp survivors who participated in Matussek's 1975 study of traumatic experiences would have been diagnosed with PTSD.

They found that while the next generation were not directly exposed to the cruel fate of their parents' generation, there was substantial evidence that many of the offspring suffered from a secondary exposure to the trauma which their parents faced. Harkness (1993) found no significant correlation between the severity of a surviving father's PTSD and the severity of the children's behaviour problems. However, Harkness found that family violence (as a result of PTSD) predicted greater distress in children than did the PTSD itself. In other words, the consequences of PTSD are likely to have a greater effect on intergenerational transmission than the syndrome itself.

Davidson et al. (1989) found that children of PTSD victims received more emotional treatment, had eating and communication disorders, and had more academic and behaviour problems than the children in a control group whose fathers did not have PTSD. More depression and anxiety (Ahmadzadeh & Malekian, 2004; Beckham et al., 1997; Dansby & Marinelli, 1999) and more behaviour and emotional problems (Jacobsen, Sweeney, & Racusin, 1993; Jordan et al., 1992) were found among the offspring of fathers who had fought in Vietnam than among children whose fathers had not. By contrast, other studies found no differences in emotional distress (Davidson & Mellor, 2001; Souzzia & Motta, 2004; Westerink & Giarratano, 1999) or social development (Ahmadzadeh & Malekian, 2004) between children of veterans and children of the control group. Rosenheck and Fontana (1998) found that Vietnam veterans whose fathers had participated in World War II developed higher emotional distress than Vietnam veterans whose fathers had not been exposed to combat. The idea that parental PTSD is linked to the offspring's risk of developing stress reactions is intriguing.

Lin et al (2009) have also written about how, along with avoidance, a second symptom and coping strategy typically associated with PTSD is that of emotional numbing (APA, 2000). Cambodian refugees who suffer from PTSD may present little emotion in relation to the past; they may be more detached from emotional responses, in general, or may feel detachment from other people, in particular. By not referencing past traumatic events in their communications with others, their silence may facilitate coping through emotional numbing and detachment. This may easily lead them to believe mistakenly that the experiences endured by the older generation are unimportant and not worth mentioning. This not only interferes with significant sharing between generations but may also cause hurtful assumptions and inaccurate conclusions about each other that reinforce avoidance, distance, and continually frustrating non-communication.

Solomon, Kotler, and Mikulincer (1988) collaborated on a unique research project that specifically set out to measure PTSD in the second generation. This longitudinal study found significant differences on PTSD measures between Israeli soldiers (with Holocaust survivor parents and those without survivor parents) exposed to combat situations. Offspring of survivors reported a greater number of PTSD symptoms that endured over a longer period of time than soldiers whose parents were not Holocaust survivors, signalling a greater susceptibility to PTSD among the second generation when confronted with major stressors.

The Solomon et al study also sets out how the second and third generations exhibit the six criteria of PTSD.

Criterion A: The Traumatic Stressor, states that the individual has had personal involvement in a life or death event or threat that is seen as compromising to personal safety or that of friends, associates, or family. The second part focuses on the person's response to the stressor. As early as 1966, Rakoff, Sigal, and Epstein noted that survivor offspring were over-represented in proportion to the number of survivor parents in the local Jewish population serviced at a psychiatry department of a Montreal Hospital. This suggests that the effects of exposure to massive trauma may persist through secondary transmission and as far as a third generation (Epstein, 1979; Sigal, DiNicola, & Buonvino, 1988). In Sigal et al. (1988) the grandchildren of survivors were reported showing "signs of fears or nervousness in everyday ordinary situations" (p.209) significantly more often than controls. These included fear of further persecution and alarm over their vulnerability to death.

Criterion B: Re-experiencing Trauma focuses on recurrent, intrusive, re-experiencing of the trauma by the individual. In Axelrod, Schnipper, and Rau's (1980) clinical observations, they recognized the occurrence of an "anniversary reaction" (p. 5) among the second generation where survivor offsprings' psychiatric hospitalization coincided with the major Holocaust trauma experienced by one or both parents.

According to Criterion C: Avoidance and Withdrawal, the individual has a tendency to avoid trauma-related cues and experiences emotional numbing. In 1966, psychologists were noting apathy and a "lack of appropriate involvement in the world" (Rakoff, Sigal, & Epstein, 1966, p.24) among offspring of survivors.

Criterion D: Hyperawareness can be described as a 'hyperawareness' manifested as sleep disturbance, irritability, poor concentration, and heightened vigilance and alarm. A tendency towards repressed aggression among survivor offspring was noted by Krystal in 1968.

Criterion E: Symptom Duration states that the PTSD symptoms (referred to in criteria B, C, D) must be present for longer than one month. There is evidence that survivor offspring carry the emotional burden of their parents for many years (Barocas & Barocas, 1973, 1979; Epstein, 1979; Sigal, DiNicola, & Buonvino, 1988). Some researchers report that adult survivor offspring attend group therapy and seek out other forms of mental health support in numbers that surpass Jewish non-survivor offspring (Axelrod, Schnipper, & Rau, 1980; Rakoff, Sigal, & Epstein, 1966).

Criterion F: Social and Occupational Impairment asserts that the symptoms must be clinically significant enough to impair functioning of life skills. Although there is some controversy regarding the life-skills functioning of military veterans, a number of studies do suggest that, among this population, we see the tendency for high divorce rates, and occupational unemployment or underemployment (Anderson & Mitchell, 1992; Pavalko & Elder, 1990). In contrast, among Holocaust survivors and their offspring a very different pattern of behaviour is displayed, characterized by high educational and occupational aspirations and achievements, as well as stable family and marital lives, and social achievements (Davidson, 1981; Eitinger, 1962; Epstein, 1979; Leventhal & Ontel, 1989; Rosenman & Handelsman, 1990; Sigal & Weinfeld, 1989). This suggests that the Holocaust did not deter survivor offspring from achieving success in areas equal to their same-age Jewish Canadian peers. However, Leventhal and Ontel (1989) suggested that the offspring are struggling with issues of personal contentment and identify strongly with their parents' expectations, also mentioned in the 'Third Generation' section of this paper.

1.8. Wider Societal Recognition

Although healing for survivors of the Holocaust and their families is never complete, the sociocultural acknowledgment of genocide is nevertheless fundamentally therapeutic (Lin et al, 2009). Through individuals, families, and societies joining together to consider and co-construct what it means to be a survivor, victim, aggressor, or bystander, and what we can learn to change for the better in the future, the pain and shame of genocide become clearer for all to grasp. For those affected directly, healing can then be facilitated through the shared (re)construction of networks of relationships and identities (Mollica, 2006).

It must be remembered that representations of history in public school curricula and instruction do not fairly account for all events (Loewen, 2008). Despite the efforts of three generations of Armenian Americans, for example, only recently has there been growing acknowledgment of their suffering. Omissions do have ramifications for the physical and mental health of families and communities whose personal stories have sociocultural and historical significance. As Lin et al (2009) state, without being taught

about the U.S. contribution to the war leading up to the Cambodian genocide and the dynamics of the genocide itself, relatively few Americans are prepared to recognise either the challenges faced by Cambodian Americans now living in the United States or the reasons to take greater responsibility for the actions of the country internationally and for the resettlement of more than a quarter million Cambodian refugees. Furthermore, Duran et al (1998) have discussed how the persecution and subsequent trauma of American Indian peoples has been even more deeply complicated by the fact that the United States is the perpetrator of their holocaust. 'Whereas other oppressed groups have a place to immigrate to escape further genocide, Native people have not had this option' (p.345). There was a lack of validation and an escape route from the wider world community. Similarly, Raphael et al (1998) have noted that in the context of the white settlement of Australia, there was a denial of the existence of the Australian Aboriginal people from the very beginning in the claiming of the land as 'Terra Nullius' or land of no people.

Tatara (1998) is concerned with the reasons for the lack of research and work about the Hibakusha and the Hibakusha-Nisei (the first generation survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the second generation offspring respectively). The first reason is to do with socio-political and cultural factors. He writes that while there is a strong antinuclear armament movement in the world today, there remain many strong supporters of nuclear weapons. Nuclear advocates tend to minimise the disasters of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the suffering of those who survived them (p.143). Similarly, Lindt (1998) writes that society has not recognised the problems of children of Nazi collaborators for a long time; not their freedom of speech, nor their very existence (p.168). The socio-political factor, the constant vigilance to prevent a revival of fascism also contributes to silence about the children of collaborators.

In addition, Tatara (1998) notes that many Asian countries who were occupied by Japan still believe that their countries were liberated by the bomb, and that it was necessary in order to defeat Japan. In Japan itself, while the government provides payment for the medical treatment of individual survivors, it provides no social or economic support for their families. Due to physical weakness, many survivors cannot hold down steady employment and pay for the education of their children, thus creating a vicious cycle of low economic status and low educational status for Hibakusha-Nisei (p.143). Biological factors are therefore a second reason for societal silence - scientific evidence about the long range effects on the human body of radiation, in regard to genetic and hereditary aspects of radiation, are inconclusive. This is linked to the third reason for a lack of societal recognition - social and psychological factors. Fears of the genetic effects of radiation have created a social stigma for the Hibakusha and their families. They may be socially rejected out of fear that their genes will taint marriages and families, leading to isolation and depression.

Hetherington (2008) has written about the link between recognition and healing. She writes, 'How society deals with, and takes care of, victims/survivors and those at the interface of the conflict (whether they are perceived perpetrator or victim) is an indicator as to how society can face up to its responsibilities towards fellow human beings' (p.42). In Northern Ireland, 'the need for acknowledgement, recognition, and validation of individual and community experiences is reflected in the desire of many communities in Northern Ireland now developing their own "commemorative" projects which have a focus on the personal testimonies and accounts of historical events…there is an esoteric desire to keep alive the memory of what happened and the value of a loved one for family and community both.' (p.48).

Qualitative interviews with survivors and victims of the Northern Irish conflict living in Great Britain, both ex-military and civilian, conducted by the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Trust in Warrington (2003, p.44-49), have corroborated Hetherington's assertion, and revealed the need for their situation to be recognised and for their collective voice to be heard. There were several avenues through which that they felt this should be done. Firstly, they felt there was a strong need to simply tell their stories, and be heard, as well as hearing others' stories. The media was also seen as both a positive and negative factor in terms of recognition. While it sometimes provided great awareness in terms of emergency planning and autobiographical accounts, media attention could also be intrusive and has been perceived as voyeuristic at times. Recognition during their interactions with community agencies, which took account of their needs and experiences, was also highlighted. Lastly, 'official' recognition was called for, since avenues such as compensation claims and benefits initiatives were afforded only to Northern Irish victims and not victims living in Great Britain. Memorials and physical landmarks were also seen by some as a way of acknowledging their experiences.

Dawson (2007) notes that thorough public investigation of traumatic events that are in the public interest is also a form of societal recognition of the pain suffered by those affected. He quotes from studies conducted with families of Bloody Sunday victims. Their trauma was produced first by the event itself, but then 'compounded by the injustices perpetrated through their unsatisfactory investigation' (Dawson, 2007, p.122). Kay Duddy, founder-member of the Bloody Sunday Justice Campaign, sister of Jack Duddy, spoke at the 25th anniversary commemoration: 'Perhaps when we have had their names cleared we can come to terms with it and finally lay them to rest.' (Guardian, 3/3/97). In a similar vein, Linda Roddy explains: 'normally, when a person dies, you're told what happened, you grieve and you get on with the rest of your life. I have been lied to for thirty years - it's hard to take. Legally, it's still on the record that William was a gunman. The British Army will not take responsibility for his murder'. (Roddy, quoted in O'Brien (2002), p.70 - see Dawson, (2007), p.138).

1.9. Role of Educators and Therapists

Lin et al (2009) thus argue that because of the need for wider societal recognition of suffering, educators can play an important role in facilitating opportunities for learning and communication to be shared among refugee students and families. The development of such opportunities for students also enables them to understand more clearly that their family life contexts are relevant to their personal, intellectual, and professional growth. An educator with sufficient pedagogical commitment and relevant content knowledge to teach about Cambodia, including the genocide and its legacy, is not only helping students broaden their knowledge of contemporary history but also resisting sociocultural silence in ways that personally engage students. Clarifying community, interpersonal, and personal dynamics related to silence, therefore, is critical for educators who aim to understand and effectively engage students from refugee backgrounds in student-centered teaching and learning.

Educators can also challenge familial silence as well as sociocultural silence. Their research indicates that by far the most intimate and detailed stories are told when children approached family members to ask about their journeys for school assignments (Lin & Suyemoto, 2008). These assignments provide a legitimate reason as well as a structure for communication. Furthermore, in learning about the Cambodian genocide and related events through the formal curriculum, younger generation Cambodian Americans come to these conversations with greater understanding and emotional preparedness, facilitating a conversation that connects, rather than distances, the generations. Cambodian American students could approach their elders with culturally valid reasons to learn about their personal journeys through Pol Pot's Cambodia.

Therapists also have an important role to play, especially as the trauma they hear may affect them too. A dramatic example of the stressful impact was described by McCarroll, Blank, and Hill (1995). In their study, Holocaust Memorial Museum staff exposed to personal artefacts, survivor histories, and archival materials, reported a range of stress reactions including: states of emotional numbing, social withdrawal, grief reactions, nightmares, and anger. If trauma is so volatile as to leave its mark on a therapist who meets a client for a limited period of time, or museum staff who come in contact with historical material alone, it is right to ask what happens to the offspring of trauma victims who interact with these individuals on a daily basis.

Hunter-King (1998) writes how, for the children of Vietnam-era missing in action soldiers, seeking support from others had helped them to achieve some resolution to a situation that seemed to have no end. Some reached out to other family members; others went to therapists or teachers or through MIA support-organisations in their attempt to bring public attention to the issue. Advice from the children included:

'Don't 'shut down' your emotions to cope with the loss. Get it out or you'll spend the rest of your life fighting to share feelings, instinctively 'swallowing' your feelings…Admit your anger or you'll never be able to forgive. Don't withdraw…Stay involved, or you'll always feel like you're on the outside looking in'; 'I feel very strongly that the entire family should get into counselling as soon as possible to be taught how to deal with what sometimes seems like an unbearable, unending situation' (p.251)

Ramzy (2006) has two recommendations then for therapists (p.308-209):

- The creation of a safe psychological space for discourse and dialogue based in the recognition that the mastery of traumatic suffering entails ongoing verbalization or wording of the suffering, and reflection on it in a group atmosphere whose sine qua non is empathy and respect for the Other - no matter how much we may disagree or, even hate, the positions being represented.
- The corollary to the consultation room agreement is that the patient verbally expresses any and all thoughts and feelings, as it applies to this kind of group process; all viewpoints are welcomed and included in the discourse; and that no one is excluded by virtue of their viewpoint nor is there anything that cannot be said or stated.

Duran et al (1998) do however condemn the lack of acceptance and availability of traditional models of therapy for American Indian people on and off the reservations. Most therapies aimed at ameliorating the social problems of Native people and the 'soul wound' are Western-centric, behavioural-cognitive models. If non-Indian clinicians have to be hired by the Indian Health Service, they must develop cultural competence, which requires therapeutic congruence with the client's culture (p.349). 'The therapeutic arena does not exist in a vacuum and is therefore suspect as a hegemonic tool…Until traditional indigenous therapies are implemented and considered legitimate, there will be a struggle, and, sadly, the suffering of a historical legacy and ongoing trauma will continue.' (p.349).

Awareness of secondary transmission of trauma may bring even greater resources into the hands of those who need it, and the second and third generation of survivors and those who will treat them.

2. Focus Groups

The focus group data has been arranged firstly according to the themes that emerged from the literature review, and secondly into themes that were particular to the Northern Irish experience.

2.1. Storytelling

Most participants felt it was important to talk to children about the Troubles, but some participants were careful to acknowledge the potential dangers of storytelling to the younger generation; of passing on sectarian attitudes and an idea of 'glory missed':

'I think we all agree that you don't lie to children but you try to explain things simply' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'Knowledge is being transferred from parents to children, but it sometimes manifests as sectarian - their parents would not have been involved, but they educated their kids in a hardline fashion at the fireside. They are so-called 'fireside rebels'. Their kids have a perception of history that is very biased. A lack of impartial information is easily exploited by extremists. They depend on people giving information with an angle - they never lived with the hardships but they like the excitement, so they are easily drawn in' [Rural community group participant]

'After the two soldiers got killed - I was out with my cousin and I realised the narrative hasn't changed because her son came back from the pub after hearing armchair politics in the pub - his mother says don't be getting involved or they'll have me to answer to' [Inter-faith group participant]

Some participants who grew up during the Troubles felt that there had been no need for storytelling about it to them, since the things that were happening were just normality:

'It was kind of normal growing up. The first things you see on TV, the bombs, shootings, it feels normal. It's only when you grow up a wee bit and you see other parts of the world that you question, well why is it like that over here, why is that not like home? To be honest it wasn't until I was much older that I was asking those questions. You never see anything else, you were born into it. It's only when you're older you ask, well what was it all about?' [Youth group participant]

While most experiences of storytelling regarding the Troubles came from family members, an ex-British Army soldier described how he experienced a particular narrative of the conflict from his superiors whilst in training:

'In our officer's room, he gave you a brief history of Ireland. On the wall he had a map - half of Ireland was in the North, and geographically, the other half was Southern Ireland. The map I saw was what we were defending. From the beginning, in our perspective, the impression was to defend one whole half of Ireland. It was deliberate; we didn't know it was really a tiny corner' [Ex-British Army group participant]

It was clear from one participant's experience that it doesn't take long for a generation gap to occur in terms of historical knowledge, if the stories are not told:

'I have a niece, and she asked what happened to me. She said who were the IRA? She was 8 or 9. That was about 15 years ago. She hadn't heard of them. The history had been lost.' [Ex-British Army group participant]

One ex-British Army soldier was quite clear about the need to have a testimony of the conflict:

'Something needs to be written down. I want a truthful telling of the events. No army bravado or politically glossed over. It is a dishonour to all the people who were in it' [Ex-British Army group participant]

Another ex-British Army soldier expressed his sense of disconnection from those he is close to because of a lack of interest in the story:

'Among people in England, there is a general ignorance. When you go and have a beer, and are asked well, what's it's like out there, and you start telling them, their eyes glaze over. The reaction is, bloody mad Irish, you know what they're like! I wanted to shake my friends and say, don't you know there's a bloody war over there? I felt disconnected to my friends, my mates from school. They had no understanding that that is real life and death is a reality, they didn't think about it until there were bombs in Britain. The British public don't care what happens to soldiers overseas.' [Ex-British Army group participant]

Another soldier saw the transmission of knowledge as taking place not so much through storytelling, as through historical myths:

'There was no closure, it just faded out. This government went a little overboard in somehow giving things to the opposition. My regiment was moved from Aldershot to

Chichester. We saw it as punishment for Bloody Sunday. This image being painted as us as the cause of it. We were the scapegoat; it has gone into the historical myths' [Ex-British Army group participant]

Emotions, not memories, are sometimes what get transferred:

'How many families will tell their son - your grandfather died on the Somme, but they can't picture it. You say it's like filling Wembley stadium 5 times over with the number of men who died - they can't picture that so the emotion becomes pride, not the reality that they got trench foot. They transfer the idea of sacrifice, not the reality of sacrifice' [Theatre group participant]

A young participant who was a child during the Troubles felt that some recent attempts at relaying stories to the general public are tinged with a sense of disconnection to the reality:

'I was at the new Troubles exhibition in the Ulster Museum recently. When it's just put, X number of people killed, X number of soldiers killed, you get very disconnected from it; not how, or when. It is all labelled to a hole - X IRA, Y Army, etc. There was no explanation of what they meant. Just a series of acronyms. The Omagh photos were black and white which I found strange - as if it was the same era as 1969. And there are no testimonies' [Theatre group participant]

The same participant felt that schools couldn't deal with the story either, which was creating a generation gap:

'My Irish history lessons stopped at 1937. Museums and schools can't deal with the past. It is avoided in schools. It disconnects you - it is as alien as any other war in the world around you' [Theatre group participant]

Another participant felt that the longer there is no shared testimony to draw upon, the more danger there is for glorification of the past violence to occur:

'The absence creates a vacuum. Other people who want to pursue the conflict are filling it with rose-tinted mythical stories - the glory of getting shot. They have no idea of how horrific it is to shoot someone' [Theatre group participant]

2. 2. Silence and Exposure

The reasons behind silence, the extent of the silence, and the after-effects of silence were all much discussed during the focus groups.

One woman whose daughter was injured during the Troubles described her silence about the injury, but how, through breaking the silence about their father's murder, the relationships in the family became better:

'My daughter would say she fell off a bike. She doesn't talk about it either…My children carry hatred. They want revenge. Five or six years ago a girl came down to the group. She asked did we ever get counselling - we didn't. She asked would we benefit from it and we said yes. My girls went to it. My three girls talked to her and cried and cried, and told her everything. Each one was bottling something up that the other two girls didn't know about. They had four sessions together. They are different now - they talk about him, with each other, and with me about their daddy. It helps you to talk about it. I'm glad we're here today. It was only after the shooting and we got talking to people outside the police family that I realised I was bottling it up. It was the counsellor telling me what the girls had got off their chest that enabled me to get stuff off my chest. I felt relief that they'd had relief. [RUC family support group participant]

The reason behind silence was very often due to fear; fear of paramilitaries, fear of isolation and reprimands from one's own community; and fear of the truth:

'Usually kids are very proud of their father. But policemen's kids had no pleasure of being able to talk about their dad' [RUC family support group participant]

'The one thing I can relate to is fear. Fear, bullying, repression, the sense of shame and the hero worshipping. Up to when I was 11, I lived in a Catholic ghetto. The IRA were put up as heroes; on the other hand they were repressors. If you were caught doing a crime you were punished by them. That's what happened to my two uncles, they went to America. There was a sense of loss, of unresolved issues in the family, and guilt. It was talked off - there were nods and winks in school. You were indoctrinated by the teachers. If you question one man I knew, he would deny it - the Black and Tans were always the oppressors, never your own. If you didn't conform to what they told you, you got a hiding. I left at 18' [ex-British Army group]

'Fear is also responsible for things not being said or acknowledged, like of being in prison; people are ashamed of it, they don't want to discuss it. It was hard to ask my father, a policeman, did you ever use your gun. It can be seen as an attack, but there is acknowledgement that he had a role in it, the conflict. This project enabled me to ask my father that, and he was luckily open to it' [Theatre group participant]

Silence was also due to not wanting to cause upset; however, exposure of involvement could also cause shame and encourage hero-worshipping:

'I never got the full story of my family's history. They didn't speak of it. It was glossed over, a big secret, don't speak of it, put it in a drawer, it will die of a lack of oxygen; he'll be upset, so don't mention it, he's bad with his nerves. Anything you did talk about was shite. A lot of violence was in the silence - in the looks, in the way people spoke to each other. Storytelling was biased by alcohol. The more alcohol, the better the stories, the more they were hero worshipped. Then the next morning, when you asked them to elaborate on the night before, they would say nothing. It was not to be talked about. There was a sense of shame, if you were from a Catholic family. My brother made a pipe bomb and it didn't go off - his friend got his hand blown off and he was a hero because his hand flew over the hedge - people had a very sick way of looking at these things' [ex-British Army group]

Exposure can simply be glorification:

'People don't talk to you anymore, people are always trying to get one better. You are in competition with each other. You're always looking for the better, the more exciting story' [Theatre group participant]

Another participant in an ex-prisoner group felt that exposure to the stories of the Troubles is sometimes about the ideals, not about the people involved:

'An intergenerational project in Tyrone found that people either hushed up altogether or talked about their dead relatives constantly, but maybe not in any meaningful way. They knew everything the dead relative stood for, but nothing about the person - did he like football? Women?' [Ex-prisoner group]

Silence could also be caused by not wanting to pass on negative attitudes as well as not wanting to cause upset. Children's curiosity often was the catalyst for encouraging parents to break the silence:

'My son, he was 5 or 6 years old, and we were on holidays in the swimming pool. He said to my wife, what's wrong with daddy's leg? She said daddy had an accident; he doesn't like to talk about it. I didn't ever say that, but without thinking, I realised I never did talk about it, and it stayed that way for 30 years. It was not until I came to the peace centre. She knew I was shot in the leg because she saw the dent. But she accepted it, and never pressed me on it. She didn't want to bring back bad memories. My kids talk about it now, but they're not taught it in history in schools, it's not on TV.' [Ex-British Army group]

'I was scared to ask my dad and mum 'what's this about.' I knew nothing about the Troubles until I was 10. People said my dad was a Provo, and I said, so what, I'm proud of it. It's the same with most of my friends - they didn't know until they were

older children too. I'm not sure if I'd been told earlier that I would have understood it' [17 year old, Victims group]

'My daughter is OK, we didn't talk about it too much, but someone would get upset, then everyone would get upset, so you'd try to keep it in. I answered questions as she asked. I was so conscious of her not growing up bigoted. I didn't feel hatred, just incredible pain. Maybe because I was part Irish. It was trying to understand, why did they pick on him? He was trying to help the two communities' [Ex-British Army group]

'I never told my kids why I was in prison. They know it's to do with the IRA. They could find out via the media. I struggle to talk to them about it. I'm afraid to influence them in any shape or form. I want them to be independent thinkers' [Ex-prisoners group]

'My daughter and I went to the Balkans and I told her all about the history. About 2 weeks later she started drawing comparisons to Northern Ireland and she asked me to talk about the history here, and I couldn't. I was afraid, I didn't want my own views to colour her. I'm in a dilemma - do I bring up my child to be ignorant of our history and learn it from her friends, or do I tell her and risk just giving her my views?' [Rural community group]

It was also highlighted that silence is a two-way process; questions need to be asked to break it, but the asker needs to be mature enough to hear the answer, if it is a difficult question:

'When people tell you something, it also highlights what you're not being told. Our responsibility is to ask questions and read the lines in-between. But we need to know how to ask questions. We need to take responsibility for what we're prepared to hear at any particular moment. To hear a colleague talk about what it's like to clear up after a bomb highlights what isn't being told in the media. It's not sugar-coating it, it's being honest. You can sense when someone's being honest' [Theatre group participant]

'We ran a play exploring 'your place in your community'. One girl's father came along all high and mighty; he was an ex-commander. That man changed that night. He had never asked his daughter about the impact on her. She began to realise and ask questions too. She said, 'Why, daddy? Why did you do it?' He couldn't answer - he was coerced into it. He didn't know the rationale for the killings. He tried to be honest with her before, but he couldn't be because he didn't have the answers for his actions' [Victim's group]

For one young person, an adverse experience prompted her to ask her mother about the reasons behind the prejudice in Northern Ireland, and a positive experience of integrated education taught her more:

'I remember a time when we were in Newcastle; my auntie has a caravan down there. We were getting hit because we were the only two Protestants in the whole play park. I remember going down but having to run back up the street because there was about 50 kids running after us. I must've been only about 5 or 6 and I remember coming in and asking my mum, 'what's so big about Catholics and Protestants?' and my mum told me then. That was the first time I ever realised, and I asked my mum, why am I different to them? My aunt had given me a wee gold chain and it was different from the chains they wore. I asked my mum, why is this different from what they have? That's how they knew I was a Protestant. I asked her what's the difference between me and them? And then my mum told me. Just vaguely, not in great detail, but I sort of just learned for myself as I got older, especially as you go to secondary school. You go to school and there is Protestants and Catholics and black people and white people, and I think that's good, I think there should be schools like that, a lot more schools integrated. Because good friends of ours have been Catholics' [Youth club group]

An older participant reports that his experience of the aftermath of the Omagh bomb prompted him to talk to try to avoid more pain:

'My ex-wife was right. I am no longer the same man. I am a better one. My memories of cleaning up after so much carnage, changed me. Omagh earned me the right to speak. I've lived through the horror of seeing what human beings can do to each other and I now believe that we all have our part to play to turn this around for our children. I will sit down and talk with anyone, if they will try to fix this; enemies, combatants, students, elders, members of the military. I will listen and I will learn and I am willing to do anything, provided it doesn't involve the killing of another human being in the name of politics. We have to stop killing our kids' [Theatre group participant].

Similarly the bomb in Newry in early 2010 broke the silence in one young person's family:

“My Mum and Dad never mention the Troubles at all. Then something happens, like that bomb in Newry, and they all start talking about it again” [Youth group participant].

It was reported that if children were met with silence from parents, they often got their information from their friends:

'If you said 'fuck' when you were younger, or you said 'IRA', your parents say don't say that, ask that, how do you know that, you're not supposed to know about that! So your peers, not your parents become your educators. The reaction I got from them must mean it's something really exciting' [Theatre group participant]

One young person spoke of how her parents' frustration with the peace process made her aware of what was happening:

'My mum and dad still talk about it...like with all that news and all on the TV with the bombs and all. My mum used to work in the barracks and her job got made redundant, and she wondered why, why is her job been made redundant when all this trouble is happening again? What's the point, with all these bombs going off?' [Youth club group]

A motivating factor behind parents' silence was often the desire to protect their children from traumatising stories, even if there were unintended negative effects:

'I was terrified that my son would follow in my footsteps, so much that he knew nothing about it - me or the conflict. I shielded him to protect him to the point of sugar-coating things, to the point now that I think I shouldn't have done that' [Theatre group participant]

'I'm 32 and I remember the wee tail end of the Troubles. I remember being about 7 or 8, living in Turf Lodge, but a lot of trouble was going on then. The hunger strikes were happening and there were a lot of IRA funerals going on. My mum and dad went to pay their respects, and I wondered why I wasn't allowed to go. I was kept away, I wasn't told. My mum and dad didn't talk about it when I was older. There was no news on in our house. I didn't hear about it until I went to secondary school. They had known what peace was, and didn't want their kids not to have that. But it made me look stupid in school. I asked if we were unionists or nationalists and they all laughed at me' [Women's group participant]

For one young person whose father was killed during the conflict, silence for the sake of protection seemed nonsensical:

'Hearing about people avoiding talking to wee'uns is weird but then again their bubble is burst. For me it was impossible to ignore it, my bubble was already burst. There was always gorey details there in front of you' [Theatre group participant].

One father's effort to protect his family, as a policeman, was to hide his true occupation. However, this caused a different type of distress in later years:

'At school one lesson was communication and the teacher asked my son 'what does your daddy do?' He said I was a builder. The teacher was angry and began to say no, he's a policeman. But my son wouldn't give in. He came home very distressed - he was aged 6 or 7 - and asked me, 'wasn't I right, Daddy?' He was worried about the implications if he lied. I then confronted the teacher, and told her that he's trying to

keep me alive. She had no idea of how that information could be dangerous. My son then starting parking his tractor across the gate in case anyone would get me. It preyed on his mind that I was at risk. When my daughter went to university I said to her that it would be great if you were at Queens. She told me that she had told lies all her life about what I work at and she had to go somewhere where she could talk about me. She went away for 10-15 years - it had a huge impact. My son wants nothing to do with 'them', they're morons. He works in Australia and all over the world now. It's sad because there are many people like him. He went to Edinburgh University. We went there regularly - it is full of people from Northern Ireland. Dundee is known as little Belfast. They are the ones that don't want to know. The chance of them coming back is low' [Inter-faith group participant]

Parents often broke their silence when they felt that children were old enough to talk about it:

'My mum's 3 brothers and my granda were imprisoned. My dad bought republican DVDs and CDs recently, and he asked me if any of it rang a bell about the past. I said yes, I remember that. So he shows me those things now, but not before' [Women's group participant]

'My kids are doing GCSE history and asked me what the hunger strikes were. I hadn't told them before that [Women's group participant]

'My kids are too young now but I will tell them when they're older' [Women's group participant]

Some participants spoke about how difficult it could be to talk to children about what happened, and that breaking the silence requires a certain skillset:

'We need to give ex-prisoners the skills and knowledge to talk about that with their kids. They may not have those skills if they have been locked away for many years. There are many different levels of that journey too' [Ex-prisoner group]

You are afraid of trauma. It's hard to know when to tell children. The truth can be traumatising. Individuals need to deal with that information in different ways. People need the tools to do that which could be very damaging if a 10 year old asks where was my daddy for 5 years? He was in jail for killing other people's daddies - that's very damaging to hear at any age. We need to remove the fear of telling the truth. We need to do it in a safe place. But if the child hears the truth from a third party, that is a big mistake' [Victims group]

One ex-prisoner described how he talks about his time in prison with other people, but not family:

'I am 12 years out of prison. I was born and reared 200 yards from the Maze where I was in prison - everyone knew me. My children were brought to see me and were brought up like that. The family knew. I had a great welcome when I came out. But we don't talk about my time in prison now with my family. I'm a normal person and I have other things to do. My son has been going out with a girl from a republican family and the conversation came around about whether I had talked to her about being in prison - no, we haven't had that conversation. But she knows my background. We don't sit around the Sunday table and talk about it. I talk about it through work with young people. There is no glorification of it. My family suffered and this is why we want to sustain the peace. My family is my family time; it's not a topic of conversation. My co-worker thought I was being dishonest. She said I would feel better to get it off my chest. That's the view of other people, but my work is my life and my family is separate - we go to the beach, go on holiday, just normal life' [Ex-prisoner group]

Indeed, in some ways a half-silence may prevail - it might be easier to relay a community story than your own story:

'It is different to talk about the individual experience versus the community experience. Those are two different personality streaks - your principles may be different on each side of that' [Victims group]

One young person felt it was easier to talk with others from a different community about the Troubles in a residential setting, but that there are still difficulties from your own community when you come home:

'It's far easier to talk to Catholics when you're away. The only thing is though, you make friends with them and all, but see when you come back into your own communities, people say, well what are you talking to them ones for? You're looked at as an outcast kind of thing. That's what happened in a lot of cases. It's not just the young people - older people should be getting integrated too. They say, oh yous are the future, but they need to work on it too' [Youth club group]

Silence within single-identity communities was reported by the older generation too:

'There was so much secrecy in the past. My neighbour was in the Official IRA and we only found that out when he was shot dead. You didn't know who anyone really was' [Women's group participant]

Denial and silence in communities was often a form of shame avoidance:

'Young people who were identified as being from republican families were ostracised from grammar schools. The principal who was a priest said we only take the crème de la crème. But three young lads from the school were killed while I was still at school, and the priest was denying to everyone that those three had ever been to our grammar school' [Rural community group]

There were a variety of experiences reported in terms of the extent to which participants learnt about the Troubles at school. It seemed to depend on the level of comfort that school teachers felt about broaching the subject:

'When we were there, they didn't go very deep, just really the main events, like Bloody Sunday, just a list of what happened. That's all they done, so we weren't really educated about it' [Youth club group]

'I did it for GCSE History, and we got everything, the whole shebang, but our teacher told us before she taught us that there were no opinions in it, it was just pure history. No opinions were represented, she didn't want to upset us, or she didn't want us to upset anyone else, so we just had to keep our heads down and keep our opinions to ourselves' [Youth club member]

'I think it's great that my boys will learn their history in school with the new curriculum - I didn't' [Women's group participant]

Some participants reported that they actively avoided talking about the subject; others said it was subconscious and they didn't even realise they were doing it:

'I would say I deliberately never talked about it; not consciously, but in my actions and deeds I avoided talking about it' [Ex-British Army group]

'I didn't deny it but people you meet - you just didn't bring it up in conversation. It was subconscious, maybe. People in my local pub didn't know until Remembrance Sunday. I said about not forgetting the soldiers who were killed in Northern Ireland. They didn't know' [Ex-British Army group]

For one ex-British Army soldier, silence could be attributed in part to a sense of shame that they hadn't done their job properly, as well as embarrassment about physical injuries:

'I was on a training course and people asked what happened to me, and I said I had lead poisoning. They said, did you live in Cornwall? Yes, that's it! As a soldier, if you

got hit, there is a sense of shame, that you were not good enough, a sense of failure. You were supposed to spot danger coming at you. There was a natural reaction of not wanting to see yourself, and others didn't want to see you - I had no jaw, no scalp' [Ex-British Army group]

Another family member of an ex-soldier revealed the awkwardness of meeting new people, and trying to protect yourself from overexposure:

'When you start a new job or something, people ask, so do you have any brothers or sisters? I never know what to say. Do you say, yes just 3 sisters, or do you say yes I did have a brother too but he was killed by an IRA bomb. It will start me again. Sometimes I'm brave enough to say that' [Ex-British Army group]

Humour was mentioned frequently as a mechanism that broke the silence about the Troubles:

'Black humour got us through. We played things down. In every ten or twenty operations, something would go wrong. We tried to get on with things and normalise it. Trust is still a big thing. It is hard sometimes to even talk to each other' [Ex-prisoner group]

However, silence can also be an effort to normalise:

'I don't like to talk about it - it is the past. You have to get over it' [Women's group participant]

2.3. First Generation - Survivor Generation

Ex-prisoners from the generation who spent their adulthood in the Troubles reported their struggle for a role in the family whenever they returned. Roles are often confused:

'I went to jail. You miss your kids' lives for 10/15 years. Then you try to take a lead role but the mother had been doing that. You can't do that because the role is not there' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'Here, often grandparents become the parents, if the middle generation was in prison. When they came out, the mother and children became more like siblings, the parental roles were confused' [Victim's group participant]

The lack of a role and regret and shame about past actions can be especially difficult for the first generation:

'Some people struggle to live with what they've done - they can't settle. That was their full time role, being in the UDA and in and out of prison. And they have gone through the extremes of staunch Christian involvement to drinking too much. They went into prison with a wife and two children and got hooked on prescription drugs in prison. Then they couldn't hold a job down, their marriage broke up while they were in prison. Women found it hard to run to prison and keep things going. It was the same on both sides, a mirror image. I knew a girl who was a legal secretary and her husband was in a flute band. They lifted her and her son and then he confessed to informing and he got life in prison. She went into total devastation and she lost her job. She was doing the double, claiming benefits and picking mushrooms, but got caught. He then got out, but her husband left her because she had changed so much. But then there is the opposite, and people are able to have good normal lives afterwards' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

Many participants reported difficulty with relationships and the tension that absence or injury had caused:

'I knew a woman and her three kids - the husband was in prison and when he came back he still saw his children as six and seven years old and couldn't understand why they didn't support Man Utd like he had done. It caused a lot of tension in families' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'My girlfriend asked my sister what I was like when I was younger - my sister said she didn't know me - I was in prison when she was young, but when I came out, they didn't know where the fuck I was, and when I was around, everyone's nerves were shot, everyone was on tenterhooks. That was a major shock to me; I had taken it all for granted' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'A counsellor told me, 'your troubles are only starting' two weeks before I got out. You look at the security gates at the bottom of the stairs, you put trap bars at the front door, you are paranoid. There is so much you are not coping with and you subconsciously put onto your family' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'I wonder if I will ever get over it. I've never had counselling. I never see my son and my grandchildren. He moved to Dublin because of the Troubles, he moved after I was shot. I don't know where my wife is - they all left after I was shot. For better or worse is a biblical thing, not a civil thing. She couldn't live with it, my disability. Anyway, I don't want to live with a woman who doesn't want to live with me. I'm in a nursing home now and I'm well looked after. There's someone to look after me and put me to bed. The most humiliating thing is getting a bath and going to the toilet with someone else. My family left because of my handicap, not because of the RUC connection. I don't know where he is - I keep making excuses for him, such as people see the Dublin registration and thought he was in the IRA' [RUC family support group participant]

The case of one ex-British Army soldier highlighted many of the different intergenerational impacts of the conflict, including silence, PTSD, and tensions in relationships:

'I suffer from PTSD and I had a crack up about 5 or 6 years ago. Up to that point I did social work, I was a director, I worked for Barnardos and I talked to other people about trauma but I bottled mine up. I said I was in a car accident, I wanted to put it behind me, it was denial, denial, denial. I was seething with resentment. I was a mountain climber; that went out the window, I was 80% disabled, blind. If the subject came up I never wanted to talk about it. But I kept getting flashbacks and had problems with booze. The doctor diagnosed me with combat stress, PTSD, 30 years later. The mental health side of it - it came out years later. The IRA and UVF people I meet - they are going through the same thing I went through, PTSD. It has the same effect on their families. I was pushing my wife away, biting the head off my son. So why have you got caterpillars crawling up your legs? That's the ripple effect of conflict. I'm hoping to do something with Combat Stress to get people I know to gradually open up the curtains' [Ex-British Army group participant]

Another participant remembers an experience that portrays the trauma of not only losing a mother during the Troubles, but of the pain that can come from adverse shielding from the experience and subsequent role-changes for the first generation:

'During the Ballymurphy massacre, seven kids were left alone, their mother was killed. The dad collapsed in the morgue. The seven kids were shipped to Wicklow and two days later they saw on the news the funeral of their mother. One girl has a constant recurring dream that her mother is running away from her. The eldest daughter had to go and pick up 5 shillings a week from state benefits. At the time the Brits played 'Where's Your Mama Gone' on the radio in front of the house. It was absolutely traumatising' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

The parenting styles of the first generation were greatly influenced by living through the Troubles. Echoing the ideas that were explored in the Silence and Exposure section of this report, there was often an intense desire to protect children from what the first generation had experienced:

'Revisionism is a good thing - it is good to reflect. I was in jail by the time I was 19, and now my boys are 20 and 21 and I do everything for them to make sure they have fun. I wouldn't even ask them to go to the shop to buy a pint of milk. I don't want them to have the life I had. It wasn't by choice that we did what we did - there were hundreds of peelers coming in trying to kill us. If my boys had gone through it they would maybe do the same but I want to protect them' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'Two of my girls were at the tech and the same crowd got at them with taunts. The police had to escort them home at the back of the college…I put the house up for sale after [my husband was killed] - no one would buy it because it was 'the policeman's house', even though he wasn't killed there. People came around and said it was a lovely house but it was a policeman's house. I was determined to move to Newcastle to get my daughters out of that situation' [RUC family support group participant]

'I put a brave face on for too long. I didn't want them, the children, to see me cry. I did it alone, when I was in bed. I bottled it up too much. I took facial paralysis, and a terrible rash came up every morning - this went on for years' [RUC family support group participant]

'I had the same instinct. You want to protect your children. They've suffered enough, you feel guilty' [RUC family support group participant]

Participants who lost sons or daughters during the Troubles experienced a generational loss; not only had they lost their children, but they lost potential grandchildren as well:

'My loss is in the other direction. I have two sons murdered, 8 months apart. I have no grandchildren from them; my only grandchild is from my daughter.
Has our suffering done us any good? You don't get over it; you learn to cope with it. You get the strength from somewhere' [RUC family support group participant]

One participant mentioned the resentment that was caused by the threat to his family because of his own position:

'My name was mentioned on air. My father got threatening phone calls while I was in hospital at death's door. They threatened to do in other members of the family. He had to put a block on the phone. Somehow they got hold of his number and got through to him. That kind of thing brought it home to me, it really brought it home to me. That made me think 'I'm gonna get you bastards'. That resentment that someone is threatening my family. But I see it from the other point of view: if a soldier broke into my family home and put us against the wall, I'd be very bitter and resentful too' [Ex-British Army group participant]

Some participants reported the difficulties that their involvement posed particularly for their own parents who grew up before the Troubles:

'We didn't have a childhood - at 14 you were scouting for Brits, and at 17 you were in the army, the IRA. My mum was SDLP but at the age I was, there was nothing my parents could have done about it' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'In Sandy Row there was almost an expectation that you would go to jail, but I grew up in the countryside where loyalist areas had lots of Catholic families who had lived there forever, and it was no issue. My mum and dad were beyond shocked about me, it was not in their wildest dreams did they have me linked to anything else. They had no idea what I was up to. But very quickly it changed to support because I was their son - it was not embarrassment of me but they were embarrassed to go out into the community. The neighbours talked about it, it was a small estate of 54 houses. 40 of them were all connected by family. My parents reckoned I must have had reasons for doing it' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'The Hunger movie does not even show the true brutality of it. And then they went through all the trauma of the hunger strike. It was more difficult for our parents. We had made the decision and if you lived or died, you would do it, you had control' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'I was on the run for years. I came back after the Good Friday Agreement. I hadn't seen my family in eight and a half years. My sister said that her best friend was more like her sister than me. My family almost disintegrated. My mother held my father responsible for my involvement. She thought my father had 'gifted' me to the IRA. It was my decision - I'm the third generation of a republican family. It was a gender thing too - if I had been a son maybe it wouldn't have been so bad. My mum maybe wouldn't have blamed my dad' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'When I told my ma and da that I was caught, she said she was relieved. She said, at least you're safe now! I thought she was mad, but your family are under more pressure than you realise. At least they know where you are' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

Often, these family difficulties were not really addressed due to issues of trust and bravado:

'There were some counselling services, but there was no trust between ex-prisoners and the state. We didn't use state services; people still felt reluctant talking to a representative of the state. There have been a number of attempts, some successful, to provide counselling from our own people' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'Some people felt that republicans didn't need counselling - we were morally right - there was an expectation that you were a hard man and could deal with it' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'Some had estranged themselves from society (according to the state) but we didn't feel like we had committed a crime so we didn't need the help that normal prisoners needed. But machismo is an element of it too' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

As mentioned before, humour was credited for breaking the silence of the first generation and with helping them to heal:

'We have a black sense of humour - me and my other friends who were shot as well. We all joke and humour gets us through' [RUC family support group participant]

Two members of a victim's group felt that this generation need more resources directed to them:

'I feel the older community are the forgotten generation, not kids today. When I worked for Age Concern I tried to find studies on the impact on older people, but all the research has been looking at the successive generations' [Victim's group participant]

'There is so much hostility. One grandmother in a group was described as the beacon of hate - you have to ask what impact are those older people having on others? Could some of those older people be encouraged to work with younger people in reconciliation work?' [Victim's group participant]

For the first generation, an experience such as seeing how others lived made them realise how different things were in Northern Ireland:

'I never left Ireland. I only left the first year of Drumcree to go on holiday. We left earlier in the day, we were anxious. We arrived in St Andrews. We realised we could see into the police station - I started crying. I couldn't believe people lived that way. It's probably a generational thing - people now leave for economic reasons - anyone living here before left for the freedom of peace' [Inter-faith group participant]

For the first generation, the process of knowledge transmission between communities changed, because old friendships were lost:

'Before the Troubles, we had Catholic friends - the street was 50/50. The only difference was that people went to different churches. When the Troubles came, the girl who used to be your friend who did Irish dancing became your 'Catholic friend'. They then moved away and you lost that friend. Initially you'd be invited to birthday parties but then things weren't the same. Whispering happened - 'she's Protestant'. And a lot of young people today have lost that cultural mix. It's very sad' [Inter-faith group participant]

One participant from this generation felt that their entire life was defined by the Troubles:

'The other thing that people forget is the length of the war - 30 years - that made it intergenerational. In Ballymurphy it was an open battleground, there was engagement every day. People's lives revolved around visiting and bringing parcels to Long Kesh every week. Socialising, the war, and the economy revolved around the prisoners. Whatever the prisoners wanted, we got it for them, because they were at the cutting edge of the war. The entire process revolved around the prisoners' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

Many participants from an ex-prisoner's support group had a sense that there was nothing else their generation could have done; they acted the same way any generation would have acted:

'None of us were handcuffed to an armed struggle, but it was the only show in town for us and we were good at it, but we still support the peace process. We have regrets; given the choice you would have gone to university and travelled the world. But I am proud of what I did. It is one of the proudest things in my life that I took up arms against the Brits but I wish it never had to happen' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'There is nothing exceptional about us, but we were faced with exceptional circumstances. The young ones today would react in exactly the same way if the same situation came to them. It's the same in Palestine, Chile, and so on. Poverty and inequality and abuse of human rights equals conflict' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

The first generation reported that they carry many different emotions with them today as a direct consequence of living through the Troubles. These included fear, suspicion, guilt, and bitterness, but also more positive emotions such as tolerance and consideration:

'I still read registration plates, I watch the door, I look under cars. I'm still looking over my shoulder, being careful who I talk to. I was shot in 1971, I was the first policeman to be shot at home' [RUC family support group participant]

'I don't think I could go back to the Troubles. My whole life was lived through it. It's only been in the past 4 years that I've calmed down. I was always suspicious, on guard, looking at cars pulling up beside you, going to new areas. In 1998 the line was drawn under what the prisoners did, and both sides were given a clean slate. The majority of people are getting on with their lives; it's the people at a higher public level who are keeping it going' [Women's group participant]

'I should have been dead. When I met the wife of the guy who was killed, I couldn't say anything; I felt like it was my fault. I dropped back, and the position I was in, the one he went into, got hit, and he was killed. It's survivor's guilt' [Ex-British Army group participant]

'A friend said to me the bitterness will eat you up. The IRA don't care if I am bitter. They put a bomb in the car where my son's body was. It had to be diffused before he could be removed. He had a donor card, but he was laying there too long for his organs to be used, and that annoys me. He was so healthy and his organs could have saved many people' [RUC family support group participant]

'It has made me more tolerant of other people. I'm shocked at the stories I've heard today. My son was murdered when he was 19. We thought he would go to vet school, but he always wanted to be a policeman. He went to Garnerville in January and he was murdered in July. My son met his murderers at a wedding. They were later dressed as butchers and approached the car at Woolworths where he was parked. The murderer is still walking around. He admitted he did it but there was not enough evidence to convict him. The murderer said my son was praying for his mother when he shot him. I realised that other people may have had a worse experience so I feel more tolerant' [RUC family support group participant]

'It has made me more caring about other people. When you've been through something, you realise that other people are going through it as well. Now I'm very conscious of our disabled police. A lot of widows brought up their children alone and they are a credit to them' [RUC family support group participant]

2.4. Second Generation - Children of Survivors

The second generation, the children of those whose adulthood was spent during the Troubles, often felt labelled by the opinions of their parents, and in some cases were even marginalised by their own community because of them:

'In the New Lodge some people are marginalised because of who their parents are. They're called Provo-licks if their parents were Provos, it has nothing to do with them' [Victim's group participant]

'You are right about young loyalists. You're right about people being apart and now they're curious about them. But there's a great fear of peer pressure and peer association. If you talk to parents (ex-paramilitaries) and their children and ask them how they interact, it's obvious that the parenting skills just aren't there a lot of the time. There's the sense that ex-loyalists are far detached from their communities and think their communities hate them. They were seen as defenders and now robbers of the community, that's a great stigma. The Lower Shankill is gangland. Young people struggle with who to affiliate with. Seventeen or eighteen young Woodvale Corner Boys are causing havoc in the community. That's part of the reason - when loyalism changed from being a defence to being something else - there was a power vacuum.

Young people aspire to get that power. Ruining their futures by attaching to an idea that has gone, the ship has sailed. If you present them with something with principles, they will jump at it' [Victim's group participant]

'Everyone here knows what my parents did, but you're not aware of it - it's almost like a conspiracy against you! If you heard that, you might have to reconsider your identity' [Rural community group participant]

There was a sense that the second generation have a great need to affiliate, to belong, to have an identity of their own, and a cause:

'There was a 17 year old on the news who spoke in response to the Massereene killings. He talked about the core republican stance. You will always get a reaction, a rhetoric, but we never have a vehicle to challenge him - he should be asked, can you give me an alternative? What is attractive about being a dissident? Where will that end? They have no answers when you challenge them. These reactions are just quick and rebellious' [Victim's group participant]

'Sameness is encouraged by parents, but sometimes the kids feel different. They felt people knew they were the kid of a volunteer. They felt everyone knows we are from victims groups. They felt a difference that they didn't even have a name for, yet sameness as encouraged. The challenge is not in getting one story that fits all, but helping kids to get their own ideas' [Victim's group participant]

'Young people are entitled to their own process of peacebuilding. Young people were disconnected from their communities and the trauma was inherited by them. Ask them where they're at and let them know that the state has responsibilities to them too. I work with Protestant groups. Their children couldn't go out and say what their father did, for example, in the RUC, and therefore had no sense of identity. It's hard now for them to work in the communities, because they feel disconnected. They are anonymous people' [Rural community group participant]

'My wee brother joined an IRA Bebo site. I had just turned 15, he was 13 at the time. I was horrified. We carry the emotions of our family but not the stories. We carry the passion and emotion, it resonates through us as we grow up. We find some form of identity with it or you reject it. You try to find a balance. It's not that I don't care about the Troubles any more, but the media is so immediatised that bombs, balaclavas aren't real anymore. Kids my age see a fictional figure but they don't know the truth of it. Drink and drugs are escapism. We don't do anything. We have 10 pubs, 10 hairdressers, 10 Chineses on the street. What the fuck are we working towards?' [Theatre group participant]

Indeed, this sense of something 'missing' in the second generation was closely tied to the danger of glorification of the past:

'There was a generation missed. People who have a high profile now did their best to keep their kids out of it. Those children now think they missed something; a glory, the opportunity for them to be involved in a conflict now gone. How do you sell peace, against the adrenaline rush of conflict?' [Theatre group participant]

'Teenagers now will tell you they have never seen an army Land Rover in the street. I think it is about experience. A younger generation now look back to the past and see the glory and honour, but no one is telling them how bad it was. You talk about dying for your cause but have you ever seen someone killed? There is nothing glorious about lying face down in a gutter with bits of you missing. Young people are surprised to see police officers carrying guns in the street. My son left with my ex-wife to Wales when he was 8. He asked me when he learnt to read what UVF meant. I thought it was time to tell him. He's 16 now and he has moved back to Northern Ireland. He has been hit like a hammer by the policemen getting injured. His friend in the PSNI is getting moved because he got a threat. He is scared about me too. He thought he came back to live in a peaceful generation but it's not like he expected. He's probably lying in bed at night wondering, is my daddy ok? He's trying desperately to catch up with a life he felt left out of' [Theatre group participant]

Various participants reported the anger that some members of this generation had or still have:

'A girl I know was interned. Her two girls didn't see her for 7 or 8 years, they were put in care. They were very angry at her; they say she abandoned them for the IRA. But she didn't. One of the daughters committed suicide and the granddaughter and grandson (her son and daughter) are all going through major counselling right now. All because of that one woman's internment. And the interned woman's sister is an alcoholic too' [Victim's group participant]

'My father was interned twice and did a long sentence in England. I went through that 'Dad, don't give me a curfew, you don't know what you're talking about' when he got out. He felt very defensive towards my mother. When my dad walked into my room my brother walked out. There was a lot of resentment' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'I am a child of an ex-prisoner, but I don't feel as easy about openly talking about it. I just remember suddenly being taken away on a train by an aunt. She told me it was my uncle and not my dad who did the crime, and I hated my uncle for it. But I then saw the newspapers and realised my dad did it and I was angry that she had let me be so angry at my uncle. I almost became proud. I didn't tell my teacher, until one

day I asked for a Friday off to see my dad in prison and then the whole class found out and I was so annoyed that kids in the class thought my dad was a criminal. I was six when my dad went in. I think they told me it was my uncle just because I was so young' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

There were other emotions mentioned that had been passed down intergenerationally, such as fear:

'At 26 years old, I don't have strong memories but I can see how far things have moved on. My grandparents would have passed on the fear of being isolated and scared at night' [Rural community group member]

Some of this generation may also experience disjointed family networks, or be disconnected from family members due to things they had nothing to do with:

'People also don't have knowledge of their half siblings. There were many mistresses of commanders who had children, and they all live in the one area. Someday someone will have a baby with two heads!' [Victim's group participant]

'I was two and a half when my dad was killed. My older brother has some memories. I was hardly told any stories about him, only about 10 stories. I used to get so upset when they talked about him, that they stopped mentioning it. It has changed over the years. When I was growing up, Mum tried not to blame all the Irish or all the Catholics. Her best friend had a Catholic Irish background, but nowadays she has got bitter recently. Maybe she tried to be balanced for our sake as children, and she is showing her real feelings now. My dad's family were less balanced in how they talked about it. We hardly see dad's family; maybe one day a year. They didn't like my mum when dad was killed. They never made much effort' [Ex-British Army group participant]

One member of this generation reported having conflicting views to her parents:

'My dad would be completely against the whole integrated kind of thing. He would be really against it, whereas I went to an integrated school, he wasn't too happy about it but it I enjoyed it and most of my friends were all Catholics. Religion just never came into it. When he grew up, he was from Glasgow, and when he was growing up they had the whole separate school thing. My mum went to a Protestant school, and there was an all-girl Catholic school across the road from her. It was all very segregated, so it's kinda like, what they know' [Youth club participant]

Children also inherit the crimes of their parents by association:

'There are children; there is a worry that children will suffer because of what we did. Fear and worry is a big issue, not about what we did but the future. I couldn't get security clearance to go to the army because of my dad's activities - so I went to the UDA. My children's clearance to get into the army is now affected - my child will inherit what I done, but it was a political crime. The state vetting applications know what you did' [Ex prisoner group participant]

As with members of the first generation, the second generation reported some difficulties in forming relationships with family members who were involved:

'My sister idolised my dad. He was in prison when she was in P1 but when he got out, she realised she had to ask her dad what way he liked his tea, as a teenager. She only stayed in the house two weeks after he got out' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

Silence also pervades the second generation as well as the first:

'One friend of mine never talked about his father to me; he was an IRA man, shot dead. He's starting to hit the drink now, but he has never mentioned it on the five years of our friendship' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'Usually kids are very proud of their father. But policemen's kids had no pleasure of being able to talk about their dad' [RUC family support group participant]

There was a sense of urgency expressed for dealing with the trauma harboured by the second generation:

'Children of ex-prisoners are probably the most neglected. My kids didn't ask for me to go to jail, to get a bomb through their letterbox. My kids have been through a lot of trauma that is not their fault. They will carry that to the next generation. They are traumatised as much as anybody else. If it's not dealt with and addressed, they will fall into criminal and or dissident paths' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'Kids need closure. One kid wasn't allowed to see the coffin taken out. They assumed it would be too traumatising for anyone to see, but it made it even worse' [Ex-prisoner support group]

'I was 40 when I was shot and my daughter was shot in her bed. The bullets went through the door. She has never gotten over it. She joined the police when she was 18. But she is still scared of the dark. She likes the windows and blinds closed all the time though. She has a bad mark on her spine and leg were the bullet entered and exited. It's still a bad wound. She would say she fell on a broken bottle to her peers' [RUC family support group participant]

'In the ambulance, my daughter asked, 'who shot me?' I said 'bad men' and she accepted that. She didn't know about the IRA. It had a terrible effect on both our girls. She had just started high school. We nearly had to drag her out of the car - she didn't want to go to school after she was shot. She also got stick for wearing a green Burberry coat - she was called a Fenian. I was trying to bring my kids up to be middle of the road, but in the end we had to take the coat off her to stop the trouble. It still affects her and she's in her 40s. Both daughters joined the police' [RUC family support group participant]

One mother reported the effect that her husband's death had on their two children growing up. She felt that her children needed her to be both a mother and a father to them:

'My son doesn't remember his father; he was only two when he was killed. My daughter was four. I told both of them the truth, that he wouldn't be coming home. My girl cried the place down and ran, and gave me a look I will never forget. She talks about him regularly. She spoke of him in church - she holds on to a memory of him. My son has a photo of his dad, that's all. She asked her brother once how would you describe growing up without a dad. To him, dad is a photo; it left a scar on her, but not him. If I leave, however, he stays up and waits for me to come in, if I'm out late. I was daddy and mummy to him, but she misses her dad actively because she remembers him. I brought him to Old Trafford - he shouldn't miss out on those things just because he didn't have his father. I'm very protective of them both. My children stayed around me. We couldn't settle in the house after he was killed so we moved to Carrickfergus. One day the guy next door came out with a trolley of stuff and he said to my son 'give that to your daddy.' My son said well, I can't because he's dead. But my daughter would have accepted the stuff, and said nothing - just thanks very much. We laugh about how we met that neighbour now. 'Dad' was a figurehead.' [RUC family support group participant]

Another mother spoke of her desire to maintain normality for her daughters, even shortly after their father's death. However, the trauma of the event has remained with the family:

'None of my girls had their dad there to walk down the aisle. One was only just before her 18th birthday when he was killed. She said she didn't want anyone to recognise her 18th birthday, but her dad had stuff planned for it and then when she heard that she gave in. There was 23 days between him dying and her birthday. Eighty people were there. I said go ahead - I'd rather it went ahead. It was the best thing that happened her, she enjoyed it. One daughter passed out at her sister's wedding; passed out at the emotion of it. It hurt her that other friends had had their daddies there, it was not fair' [RUC family support group participant]

A father whose son is a young adult now feels that he does not have a grasp of what the reality in Northern Ireland is like:

'I speak openly to my son about it - out of necessity. I feel he's running around in a little pink cloud. There are colleagues of mine whose kids didn't go away but are doing the same things with their kids. We have young people who joined the police force post-ceasefires and are like, I didn't sign up for this! The honeymoon period is over' [Theatre group participant]

Younger members of this generation do have some of their own direct memories of the conflict:

'Well I remember the tail end of it like. I remember a lot of riots, I remember when I was a kid seeing the barracks being blown up. I'm 19. I was maybe 5 or 6 when it was blown up' [Youth club participant]

'I remember my mum being in that day, I remember everyone going around to see if she was still alive and stuff, and I remember the alarms going off and everyone putting their helmets on to get out in time. I was born in 1992' [Youth club participant]

Some young people recalled their confusion they felt while they had been trying to understand the Troubles and its complexities:

'My dad was English. A girl asked me in the new estate, are you Catholic or Protestant? I said Protestant, I didn't know. The girl said the next day my daddy says I'm not allowed to play with you anymore. My mum told me if anyone asks you again, say you're Catholic' [Women's group participant]

'I remember being four and my granny teaching me about bin lids. I didn't know what the background was' [Women's group participant]

'I once asked a soldier to sponsor me for a sponsored silence in school; my dad was raging at me!' [Women's group participant]

'You were afraid of going into town and getting searched' [Women's group participant]

'I had a fear of my mum and dad going out. I would be crying all night until they got home. My mum had said that bad things happen in pubs, so when she went out I cried myself to sleep - it was the fear of not understanding what's going on' [Women's group participant]

'I used to wonder why my mum and dad changed their hairstyles a lot, change their image. They knew people were after them so they'd dye their hair. My mum is amazed now that I remember that' [Women's group participant]

One young participant recalled the excitement she felt when the ceasefires began because it meant that she would have more freedom than before:

'I remember when the ceasefire was announced, my mummy started crying but I was so excited because it meant I could go into town on my own! I wasn't trusted to go anywhere or do anything by myself' [Theatre group participant]

However, members of the second generation emphasised that the Troubles were not the major issue in their lives, and others who had worked with this generation reported this belief as well:

'Our group did an exercise with children and media. Children had cameras (children of former prisoners). We gave them topics to take photos of. We expected murals etc, but it included normal day to day family things, like a boat in Kilkeel. It meant that these children who had gone back and forward to prison - that was part of their life, but other, normal things were part of life now too, such as school and friends' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'It's just over something stupid. I don't care, there's people dying and getting killed for Ireland, or something stupid. It's unbelievable. I think everyone should just get along. You just go day by day and forget about it all. People can't leave it - it's either done by the Provies, or once the Provies are done with it, it's gonna go to the immigrants, there's always gonna be fighting, always gonna be wars. To be honest with you I don't think it's over' [Youth club participant]

'Refugees and asylum seekers, I think that's more important, it's more of an issue now. Them immigrants coming in and taking jobs, I think that's been more of a problem than all that peace stuff. That's more of the issue than Catholics and Protestants. It's just this past few weeks that I think it's got worse, the peace stuff. The bombs going on. If that keeps going on people will be scared to go out of their houses. It'll go back to the way it used to be. My mum used to say, my granny lived on the Shankill, and they moved out to the country to get away from all that. And I think it's gonna start like that again' [Youth club participant]

'Yeah our problems aren't between the two communities....there's people who are homeless, people who can't get jobs, can't pay for anything. People are far more worried about that' [Youth club participant]

'I work with girls from the Shankill. We both think economics and our everyday lives are more important. Both sides run down their own politicians for talking crap. Children's education is more important - it's about getting educated and involved with your community and your schools' [Women's group participant]

Members of the second generation were aware of the delicate nature of the peace process and the need for more community relations work today:

'They're trying to make everyone happy, but someone's gonna do something, someone will get annoyed and it'll kick off' [Youth club participant]

'There's not enough integrating the two communities. A lot of places just put big walls up, and just kept them separate for years' [Youth club participant]

'If 10, 15 Catholics walked in here, you would actually go, hmm, what's going on, that's the way it just is, but if you actually got to know the Catholics. We're not totally mixed in together with them yet like, we're still friends with Catholics, but still, if a lot of people walked in, you wouldn't want them to because it looks like...you're up to no good' [Youth club participant]

'I've been on trips with Protestants and it's fine, I've no problem, but still driving down the Shankill Road freaks me out. Yes, I went up there once thinking I had 'Fenian' written across my head. I went into a place called 'Ulster Fry' - it was just more intimidating because it was 'Ulster', and on the Shankill Road. The men were all called Billy and Sammy, which isn't strange, but I thought 'Oh God!' [Women's group participant]

They also want more consultation:

'I don't think they are doing what people want. I think they're doing what they, the MPs want. I mean I don't have a clue but I think they are just pleasing themselves and not other people. They're not taking into consideration those views, and what they want to see. I think they're just doing what they think is right, when really they should ask people and get people's views. I remember hearing a while back that people were getting money or something, people who were in jail were getting money. I think that is just completely sick - why should they get money when they were killing people?' [Youth club participant]

Frustration was expressed by one participant who felt that the generation who inherited the conflict have a lot of expectations laid on them to solve it:

'In every conflict, the ordinary people don't sit down and agree to start a war, but they are expected to end it. They weren't involved in creating the conflict and don't want to be held responsible for making the peace. My residents group wasn't around in 1969!' [Rural community group participant]

There was a sense from some in this generation that war and conflict in its various forms was inevitable:

'I remember when I was a kid, everything all kicking off. I was watching TV and my uncle was shot by the Provies. I was watching it on the TV and my dad and all was crying. Everyone was kicking off and slabbering and all that he was only out at work and he got shot. And then I was told stories about up in Lisburn, bombs going off, there were a lot of soldiers killed, and there was a bomb in some man's car outside the Texaco garage; there was a bomb in the postbox, it blew him to smithereens. It wasn't good - I want the Troubles to end, but to be honest with you I just don't care about them. They can do what they want - I'll never be doing anything to go back at them again. I was born in 92, I'm 17. I don't think there is a conflict here. There's always going to be trouble - riots, shooting, bombings - but that's just like everywhere. People are talking about something that's not there really - they argue, it's stupid really, it really is' [Youth club participant]

2.5. Third Generation - Grandchildren

Parents of the third generation (the children of those who were children during the Troubles) reported that even though their children are as young as three years old, they are beginning to become aware of the conflict.

'My kids were 5 or 6 when I went to Glencree. I started talking about it the same time they asked questions about why I didn't have a dad. Their friends now come to me and ask what I'm talking about; a 5 or 6 year old's mind is very vivid. Being blown up sounds very exciting. Their mums were also asking what I was talking about. I realised that I hadn't told some of my older friends, they didn't know' [Ex-British Army group participant]

The influence of grandparents was mentioned by one mother:

'My son is only three but he is asking questions. His grandparents are very republican and he knows the Easter Rising flag. If my son asks what is this or that, I will tell him' [Women's group participant]

Opinion was divided in a women's group about whether it was better to bring children up now rather than during the Troubles:

'It will be a far better upbringing now. There are no scary army men on the streets' [Women's group participant]

'I think raising kids now is better. I had a fear of just going to the shops. Kids don't have that now' [Women's group participant]

'I think they have worse things to deal with like the stabbings that are going on' [Women's group participant]

'There's more drugs now. The IRA took it off the streets before and it's more visible now' [Women's group participant]

'I would prefer to be a child in the Troubles than now. There's so much peer pressure now to take drugs. My own childhood was secure. I dread my kids growing up. I had a curfew; if my child's not in the house I panic' [Women's group participant]

Some of their children are becoming aware of the old divisions:

'My boy is 6 and he's football crazy. He knows there's something between Celtic and Rangers. He knows Rangers are Protestant' [Women's group participant]

'We went to see Scooby Doo in the Opera House and went to KFC on Shaftesbury Square afterwards. My wee boy shouted 'he's wearing a Rangers top!' at someone in the shop. I went to the KFC counter and the server said to me 'we don't serve Fenian bastards'. That was two or three years ago' [Women's group participant]

They are also aware of the allegiances of the generations above them:

'My wee boy said recently, 'when I grow up, I want to play football for the Republic.' I said no, you'd play for Northern Ireland. He said no, what's the Northern Ireland team? They have a football team?' [Women's group participant]

One parent felt it is impossible for this generation not to be aware of sectarianism:

'Kids today still see the tension. Low level sectarianism is very high now and it was before 1969. We haven't had a decade where we've had an absence of violence. We are treading water at the line between violence and non-violence - this is sowing the seeds for the next cycle of violence; there is dishonesty about the sectarianism that is going on' [Rural community group participant]

One mother mentioned how her daughter was completely unaware of a 'traditional' division:

'My daughter didn't know her friends were Protestants. My son and daughter went on the 11th night in Scotland to the beach with them. They were learning to sing the Sash. She had no idea, but my son was laughing - he went to an integrated school and so he knew what it was and she didn't. When she came into the house singing it I said don't sing that in Poleglass! She had no idea' [Women's group participant]

Parents' desire to protect their children from sectarianism still affects the names that the next generation have:

'I love Irish names but I wouldn't give my kids Irish names. My husband is called Sean and we were coming out of the Odyssey one day and I called him over to something, and he got attacked by a gang' [Women's group participant]

For some, it is difficult for them to reconcile what they do know of their parent's past with what their changed opinions are today; it is hard for them at a young age to understand the grey nature of the peace process:

'My son is so confused. I was in prison, but now support policing. He asks me if the peelers are good or bad? You are giving them conflicting messages. My view of policing has changed over time, but it's very difficult to explain that to an eight year old' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

2.6. Wider Societal recognition

Two ex-prisoners felt that there needs to be recognition from the unionist community that they, as ex-paramilitaries, are part of the unionist community too:

'The public discourse has been that involvement was disgraceful - but the local communities felt different. Politicians were saying to individuals 'well done lads'. The hypocrisy is so grounded now that they can never recognise what working class people put up with. We were legitimate but not legitimate. Loyalist communities were used the whole way through. Politicians can come into the estate with a drum and saying no surrender, and then people went out the next day and voted for them, but never saw them again for four years until the next election. The snobbery of loyalist politicians is incredible - they lived with me on the street but now they don't ever come back' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'There is a failure too to acknowledge that there was a conflict. Part of my visioning of Prison to Peace was recognition from unionist leaders that loyalist prisoners did what they did because they had to. It would give us a sense of putting it behind us. If the conflict starts again, who will go out? The DUP? Will they fill the streets? There is state silence. Politicians are in self-denial and have denied the existence of paramilitaries in their community. Davy Irvine said 'Who wants to speak to scum like me?' There is no closure until that recognition happens. You can't airbrush history. Structures are being put in place but the foundation work has not been done' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

One ex-prisoner thought that overall, there was a lot of unionist hurt that had not been recognised in an official way:

'80% of East Belfast is now affluent. 20% are working class, and there are no victims groups there. A whole lot of hurt in unionism is lying there, and it is being covered up. We need recognition as part of a human rights strategy/campaign' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

One ex-RUC officer felt that the extent to which they had suffered as a community had not been recognised either:

'The number of RUC officers murdered here would be equivalent to 10,000 murders of policemen in the mainland. It's like Vietnam - politicians don't want you to mention it. The silence here is like the silence after Vietnam' [RUC family support group participant]

Other participants felt that the additional needs of Northern Ireland as a post-conflict state are not being provided for:

'It is about state responsibility - it is for the individuals in the state. The services are not there because the state won't accept any responsibility. They say the reason for the trouble is because these awful people are our citizens. But it is a moral position, a rights-based argument for the provision of services in Northern Ireland. Services in Northern Ireland are the same as Hartlepool - it is not acknowledged that mental health services are probably needed more in a post-conflict society' [Rural community group participant]

'The entire community is still traumatised by the whole thing' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'We need to own up to the need for mental health services, we are in a much worse position than we've admitted before. It is scary to admit it' [Rural community group participant]

This was partly attributed to state embarrassment and shame:

'Embarrassment is rampant - we need to claim it as our own 'come in out of the cold' and claim it as our own and deal with it. We are not and cannot be as polite as the English about this' [Rural community group participant]

Explanations for the state silence included the fact that some people 'just don't want to hear about it anymore':

'People don't want to hear my story. The people I talk to are getting on OK thank you very much, the Troubles don't affect me, thanks. They don't want to hear about the past anymore' [Inter-faith group participant]

'This is a society that has clammed up. When I hear prisoners from republican groups - many people wouldn't listen to them. Some carry a dreadful burden. They are likeable devils. Thank God I didn't kill anybody they say. The relief he had was great. Others who did kill are so burdened with grief, they may end up in suicide, mental institutions. Ones who don't show any regret - I think they have cut it out of their minds and shut it away. One is a basket case' [Inter-faith group participant]

Some ex-members of the British Army felt that their service was not and is not being adequately recognised by the State:

'No ramp service, no honours - it's Northern Ireland, not a 'war'. During the conflict in the 1970s, 80s, 90s, the bodies all came over in freight. There was no military burial, no procession, no pomp and no ceremony' [Ex-British Army group participant]

'The cameras were all there for the Falklands War vets coming back. We just flew back to Germany, and got pissed!' [Ex-British Army group participant]

'There is no Northern Ireland-specific medal. There are bravery medals that were awarded; one bomb disposal guy got an Elizabeth Cross. You got a GSM, a General Service Medal' [Ex-British Army group participant]

'There was an irony. I got shot through the head, shoulder and leg; but because it wasn't a war situation, I could sue the British government for receiving those injuries, under the Criminal Compensation Act. I was assaulted by a 'criminal', and because I was not doing a 'policing role', they could pay me because they hadn't trained me to be a policeman. I got the compensation. It wouldn't work in any other situation where you were in 'active service'; we were an aide to civil authority' [Ex-British Army group participant]

The additional needs of women in a post-conflict society were also highlighted as a topic where there has been state silence:

'The UK said there was no conflict here so they didn't have to implement the UN resolution on helping women after a conflict. It was not recognised until one year ago but no work has been done on it' [Rural community group participant]

One participant highlighted the extreme sensitivities that go with recognition of suffering, especially when there are ongoing instances of violence related to the conflict:

'With the Holocaust, there was an end to it. It was an end, if Hitler had won this would happen in the whole world. But with Northern Ireland, it is ongoing and there are the seeds for it to hit again, so the British government are walking on eggshells in case it upsets too many people' [Ex-British Army group participant]

2.7. Role of Educators and Therapists/Transitioning Society

Some participants highlighted the importance of creating shared identities in efforts to move forward as a society, especially when working with younger generations:

'We do transition training around unionism. We are trying to create a shared identity that goes back to Martin Luther. When you explain that 600 years ago, everyone was Catholic - it is a shock' [Victims group participant]

'We had the same experience teaching kids that the 1798 rebellion was founded by Presbyterians and Masons - it is a shock to young republicans. We need to carefully construct joint histories' [Victims group participant]

'If we had more mixed identities - here it is mostly made up of religion and politics - it would be easier. If you take young people away for a weekend, they find a common identity, but they go back to their neighbourhood and have to fit in again, and revert to the single identity' [Rural community group participant]

The need for more education about the conflict, and the difficulties of actually doing that with young people were highlighted:

'Where would you go to get impartial history in Northern Ireland? What and why it happened is contested and the language used to describe it is contested. How we could convey it neutrally is almost impossible at the minute. Loyalist and Nationalist views are perfectly legitimate but kids need to get them themselves' [Rural community group participant]

'History taught in schools is sanitised. Only soft issues are discussed. Both communities here feel they won, and history is taught by winners. Family history and community history is far more important than what's on TV. There is also the demonification of the people who were involved. People lived down the lane from these people - they knew the person wasn't a psycho but the TV news was saying that' [Rural community group participant]

'There is no guidance for the education system on how to deal with kids who feel they have no identity - it is all down to individual responsibility' [Rural community group participant]

'None of us hold the 'truth'; we all have partial truths' [Rural community group participant]

'There is work to be done in what WAS the Troubles - work has to be done impartially about the realities of that. That this is part of your history, the harsh reality of it, it has to start in the family. With the number of incidents happening all over Northern Ireland, young people are glorifying it' [Rural community group participant]

Some members of the second generation felt that their teachers and schools need to take more creative approaches when they are teaching them about the Troubles:

'If teenagers are being recruited you need to sit down and tell them what it's like. I heard your story, X, and I feel like I have a clear picture of what prison's like. I had an opportunity to hear that. We'll teach you about war in school, but we won't teach you what it's like; it's never going to be told in schools' [Theatre group participant]

'If you deliver the history the same way you teach a Spanish lesson, people switch off. You need to see the image of a girl running naked from the Napalm attack to realise war is bad. X's story gives the tragedy, enormity, horror of it' [Theatre group participant]

The difficulties for educators include debates on language and definition:

'They (ex IRA) are still getting help from Martin McGuinness, the EEC are giving them money because they are considered 'victims'. I think it is hurtful for someone who is injured in the line of duty - they are a victim, but IRA men are 'victims' too. It galls me' [RUC family support group]

'The other question is what does conflict mean? I would say as a policeman, I was not in conflict; I was just doing a job. You need to be careful with words. I joined the police to be a policeman, not to be in a conflict. The RUC were doing a job - they

weren't party to a conflict. The Army weren't in conflict. I was just doing a job, and doing it impartially. It was a commitment' [RUC family support group]

'It's a case of equalisation. People try to equate terrorists and criminals into a crusade - there was an army side/police side versus the terrorists' side. There are memorials to victims and memorials to terrorists' [RUC family support group]

In addition, children not only need to be taught facts about the conflict, but also become aware of conflict resolution strategies that they can apply to other areas of their lives as well:

'War is glorified. How can we expect young people to think that violence is not the only route to take? Historical wars are narrativised as 'nation-building' and on Eastenders, the way to resolve a conflict is to punch someone in the face. It is locally and internationally inbred' [Rural community group participant]

One participant emphasised the power that schools have in influencing children's attitudes:

'Sometimes, schools speak on behalf of the teachers, so it's up to the school if they show it. When schools develop a way of getting conflict into the schools and teaching it, things might move forward. Children question parents' knowledge, but they accept teachers' knowledge. If the school teaches it, then it's OK' [Theatre group participant]

2.8. Additional Themes Emerging from Focus Groups

Whilst the focus groups that were carried out focused mainly on intergenerational impacts and the transmission of those impacts, other themes emerged from the discussions which may be worthy of future research:

Rural/Urban Division

Some participants felt that there is a lot of unrecognised fear due to sectarianism in rural areas, more so than in urban areas:

'In an urban setting the lines are clearer. In a rural context, the main street is dominated by one community, and the hinterland is dominated by one. The 'other' is living within your space - it creates fear and there is no sense of security. In urban areas there is a sense of the wider community protecting you' [Rural community group participant]

'In the urban setting, I have heard people say 'my name is so and so and I am an ex-UVF soldier'. I have never seen that happen in rural areas. Why? People probably don't feel safe enough to do it' [Rural community group participant]

'Interfaces are in rural areas too. They are less evident but very real and tangible. There's no flags and graffiti but much tension beneath the surface. The flags give a certain sense of protection. No flags don't mean there are no issues, that's false. But it is more dangerous in a scattered community, because where do you start? It's easier to give denial; you have to make matters worse before they get better' [Rural community group participant]

'Rural people don't have the choice to go to one leisure centre or the other depending on your 'side' - you didn't get a sense of that until you went to Queen's for university [Rural community group participant]

'There is more money in urban areas, therefore if people want to move on, there's more support for them to do it' [Rural community group participant]

Traditional divisions in rural communities are also changing for other reasons, which may alter community relations:

'The demographics are changing now in rural areas. There is out migration because of the house prices and the planning process. The planners may agree a new estate but not agree for another house on a farm, so people's sons and daughters have to move to a different village' [Rural community group participant]

'Limavady has now flipped demographically. It now has a slight nationalist majority. Protestant farmer's children can't build houses so they move out' [Rural community group participant]

Class Divisions

Some participants made a link between class issues and challenges to the peace process:

'Peace III money is often directed at the middle classes and storytelling and debate needs to be focused on the people who will not find out about those resources by themselves' [Rural community group participant]

'The middle classes 'don't mention the war' attitude is hypocritical. They'll leave this hospital, or that office, and then say to the people on the street, 'good on ye, keep on doing what you're doing' with a nod and a wink - we're all in this together' [Rural community group participant]

'There seems to be a danger of it becoming a middle class peace process. A stratum of people are closing it down - they say, don't tell me anything about prisoners and prisons any more. They are the people who have all moved out of the estates. They believe it's finished, over, get over it. The statutory agencies, the new state ones, are all middle class. They've had enough and don't want to hear any more' [Ex-prisoner group participant]

'I worry about young people who weren't affected, the middle classes, but who are bigoted. They will become the legislators of the future. There are a lot of well-educated bigots. People I know who have travelled around the world and see themselves as great liberals, come back to Northern Ireland and they are as bigoted as ever. They are just more articulate about their bigotry' [Victims group participant]

Another participant made a link between class issues and the renewing of conflict along new divisions:

'BNP material has been coming through the doors of working class people for years. It is also a traumatised people. Memories of being burnt out - memories go on through the generations. Still a lot of trauma comes out - so the influx of Romanians, they can't cope with it. They do what was done to them - they need help too' [Inter-faith group participant]

Effect on Religious Faith

Some participants of an inter-faith group felt that the changes in Northern Irish society were in part linked to a change in church attendance and faith:

'The Troubles may have increased church attendance, I'm not sure. It was not a badge of identity; it was for support and help. People need a sense of hope, something to keep you alive, to have faith in. Looking at Poland which still has huge church attendance. The church there had identified with ethnic roots, therefore people hold on to it closely. The Troubles or post-ceasefire, things are definitely changing. We are beginning to ponder that ethnicity is not as important. People maybe now have changed allegiance as well a bit; the churches are against paramilitaries therefore alienated themselves from that ethnic identity. Young people and their grandparents aren't attending either - something has been happening for a long time, it's not just happening now. Young people want to make up their own mind and get away from their parents. The 1950s and 60s is when it began, it's not just conflict related, but Northern Ireland also has conflict related breakaway. In Northern Ireland it was more a badge of honour to be Catholic' [Inter-faith group participant]

'When you went to church - you knew you were a Catholic, to show you were a good IRA man and vice versa for churches and the loyalist paramilitaries. Now there are no longer paramilitaries, so those people don't feel the need to go anymore' [Inter-faith group participant]

'Catholics feel very antagonistic. The Church was part of the enemy. They weren't getting support from it. People say churches contributed to the conflict in some senses, for example, segregated schools' [Inter-faith group participant]

Media Influence

Participants highlighted the positive impacts that the media can have in terms of forwarding the peace process in Northern Ireland:

'I worked with 16 and 17 year olds. They are sick of hearing anything more about it. They just want the benefits of what they can get right now. The teenagers who come to see our play are very moved; it is presented to them in a different way. I got a letter from a 13 year old, saying I didn't realise it was real history, with real people still walking around. She wants to work on our next project. They don't want to hear any more about it because of the way they are being talked to about it' [Theatre group participant]

Others highlighted how it can be intrusive and detrimental:

'One man never had any psychiatric help after La Mon bomb. He was on a phone-in show and he was being re-traumatised live on radio. There are a lot of damaged people bringing up children who have never received help. Western society has an addiction to parading people's trauma on reality TV and radio - asking them, how did you feel that night? Instead of dealing with it slowly' [Rural community group participant]

'The media put their slant on trouble these days. Any trouble is down to Catholic and Protestant youth, when it is probably just hoodlums, and that feeds back into the estate. The youths in the estates then get angry with the other youths when they hear that, and want revenge' [Women's group participant]

'I wasn't at Bloody Sunday but some things were inaccurate of the film's depiction - they were always presented as baby-eating paras, not the reality of rules of engagement. The gas masks were only on for a brief period in Bloody Sunday. In the film, they were on the whole time, as faceless soldiers. And a shotgun made a tiny wound in the film - that's inaccurate, a shotgun doesn't do that. Several other bits were not accurate. When looking at prejudices, you need to have an open mind. At

Combat Stress, people would find it very difficult to watch that. It is still living in the past, not the present. Combat Stress should look more at truth recovery' [Ex-British Army group participant]

'I went to a riot in Belfast, then watched it on the TV later. There was no correlation between what the TV guy said and what we remembered happening on the ground. News people put a slant on things; they build it up to make it more interesting. There was 4 paras injured and 2 people killed that day. According to the news, there were 3 killed and 2 injured. It was a totally inaccurate picture of what happened. Myths get created. It worries me, it's not the real world. It's not reported in an open, factual basis' [Ex-British Army group participant]

3. Conclusions

The immediate general conclusion to be drawn from the current study is that the intergenerational transmission of the experience of conflict in Northern Ireland corresponds with international trends identified in the research literature. Namely, that the effects of harm (broadly defined) and the experience of injustice carried by a particular generation can, if not addressed or resolved, be passed on to the next generation to produce a range of social and psychological pathologies, such as self-harm, suicide, anti-social behaviour, anomie and inter-personal violence. While such behaviours may be caused by a variety of factors, in those cases where intergenerational transmission is a factor, there is a danger that the corresponding policies and interventions may be ineffective, or worse, may exacerbate the situation.

Thus, the research presented here is an important first step in placing the experience of Northern Ireland firmly within the broader context of other post-conflict regions. This allows us to compare and contrast the Northern Ireland case with others. In so doing it helps us to learn from, and to contribute to, the larger discussion on the intergenerational transmission of trauma. In the Northern Ireland case, where relatively little time has passed since the signing of a peace agreement, divided communities are still in the early stages of negotiating shared social, political, and geographical space. This contrasts with many of the other cases which have been the focus of researchers, where decades have passed since the occurrence of the defining traumatising event. Indeed, there may not be a formal peace agreement marking the end of a conflict, or even an acknowledgment of the defining traumatising event. Cases would include the Holocaust, the Palestinian al-Nakba, the Khmer and Armenian genocides and massacres of indigenous peoples around the world. Within this context, addressing the legacy of the conflict, and peace-building more generally,

are intimately wrapped up with intergenerational issues. To the extent that communities and decision makers in Northern Ireland act now to address these issues, they may avoid the traumatising impact of the troubles on further generations as time passes. This has implications not only at the level of individuals, but at a societal level where armed groups exploit such conditions to recruit for their agenda of violence.

There are, in addition, four specific conclusions relating to peace-building work in Northern Ireland.

The first conclusion concerns the place of storytelling as a means of both transmitting and addressing inter-generational trauma, both inside and outside the home. The use of storytelling as a methodology for individual therapy and societal peace-building is evident in every post-conflict region. However the universality of the methodology does not mean uniformity of practice or of impact. Indeed, in all situations we find cases where storytelling has had positive impacts (individually and societally) and where it has had corrosive or trauma-perpetuating impacts. Therefore, an important conclusion of the current study is the need to undertake a scoping exercise of all the projects and agencies in Northern Ireland which employ storytelling techniques, so that they may be classified and analysed according to aim, context, nature of participant, methodology and impacts. Once this has been done, we would be better positioned to assess the evaluation tools, techniques, and approaches for their utility in measuring the effectiveness of storytelling in the peace-building process.

The second conclusion concerns our understanding of trauma and its place in peace-building. As demonstrated in the literature review, research on inter-generational trauma focuses predominantly on individuals and families. The field is dominated by psychological approaches. The use of one-to-one therapy and inter-group therapy in the aftermath of war has been long appreciated. The level and nature of trauma, and the particulars of the individuals involved, shape the type of response best suited to the situation. However, very little research is asking the question: what should we learn about therapeutic approaches to trauma at the level of the individual that might be applied in peace-building approaches to collective trauma at societal levels?

More systematic research and work needs to be undertaken to understand the dynamics of, and modalities for, helping individuals to build positive relations at an intra-personal, inter-personal, inter-group and at the broader societal levels. In such work, outcomes might include the elaboration of shared narratives and the re-constructing of identities, within and between the generations of subgroups within violently divided societies. Another outcome might be the empowerment of individuals, especially adults, to assert control over their own stories and to develop a communication skill set that enables older generations to constructively engage younger generations about the conflict and reconciliation.

The third conclusion concerns the backward looking orientation of much of the current research. The focus groups in the current study were very much oriented towards the new generation and next generations. In the Northern Ireland context, this is particularly important in light of the fact that anyone under 21 today is unlikely to have had direct experience of the conflict prior to the peace agreement. For research on intergenerational trauma to possess peace-building potential, it needs to self-consciously position itself at this very juncture (or "interface") between the effects of the past and the possibilities for the future. While much peace-building work tends to deal with the past, there is a tension between that backward-focused orientation and the need to imagine and to build a future of equality and social justice that is liberated from the self-imposed limitation of past conflict. This "future oriented" voice is heard in the stories told in the focus groups. However, there is a need to create the infrastructure and support mechanisms not only to encourage and nurture these voices, but to harness them explicitly to peace-building and reconciliation efforts.

Fourthly, and finally, a recurring theme in the literature and interviews is the need for public acknowledgement of the impacts of the variety of conflicts that collectively constitute the Troubles. These are reflected in the stories of pain and loss that emerged during the focus groups and that are carried by each person in Northern Ireland. This need was shared by victims, former prisoners, former members of the British Army and others. Governments, no less than individuals, must acknowledge this clearly, genuinely and, if necessary, repeatedly so that it permeates the state, civil society and the private sector. Only then will current and subsequent generations be freed from the crushing weight of someone else's violent past. Only then will they be able to begin building a future which is inclusive and just, and most importantly, genuinely theirs.

Appendix 1: Bibliography

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Appendix 2: Details of the Focus Groups

No.	Date	Name	Location	Attendance
1	April 4th 2009	Sustainable Peace Network (Programme developing leaders in sustainable peace building)	Derry	7 people (2 female, 5 male)
2	June 29th 2009	Inter-faith Group (Representatives from Catholic and Protestant churches)	Armagh	8 people (5 female, 3 male)
3	July 7th 2009	(Republican ex-prisoners support and services group)	Belfast	8 people (3 female, 5 male)
4	September 17th 2009	Rural Group (Representatives from rural community organisations)	Cookstown	12 people (8 female, 4 male) 4 new to PIII and IPC
5	October 23rd 2009	Social justice oriented theatre group	Derry	9 people (4 female, 5 male)
6	November 12th 2009	Ex-prisoners group: UDA, UVF, INLA, Provisional IRA and Official IRA	Belfast	9 people (9 male)

No.	Date	Name	Location	Attendance
7	November 17th 2009	Family and retired members of RUC	Belfast	10 people (5 female, 5 male)
8	November 23rd 2009	Young Mothers' Group	Lisburn	11 people (11 female) 11 new to PIII and IPC
9	November 27th 2009	Cross-community project dealing with legacy of the past	Belfast	7 people (2 female, 5 male)
10	January 15th 2010	Ex-British Army members and relatives	Warrington Peace Centre	7 people (3 female, 4 male) 7 new to PIII and IPC
11	February 24th 2010	Youth Group	Lisburn	22 people (4 female, 18 male) 22 new to PIII and IPC

Total number of participants: 110
47 females (43%) and 63 males (57%)
44 new to PEACE III and IPC

Notes

Notes

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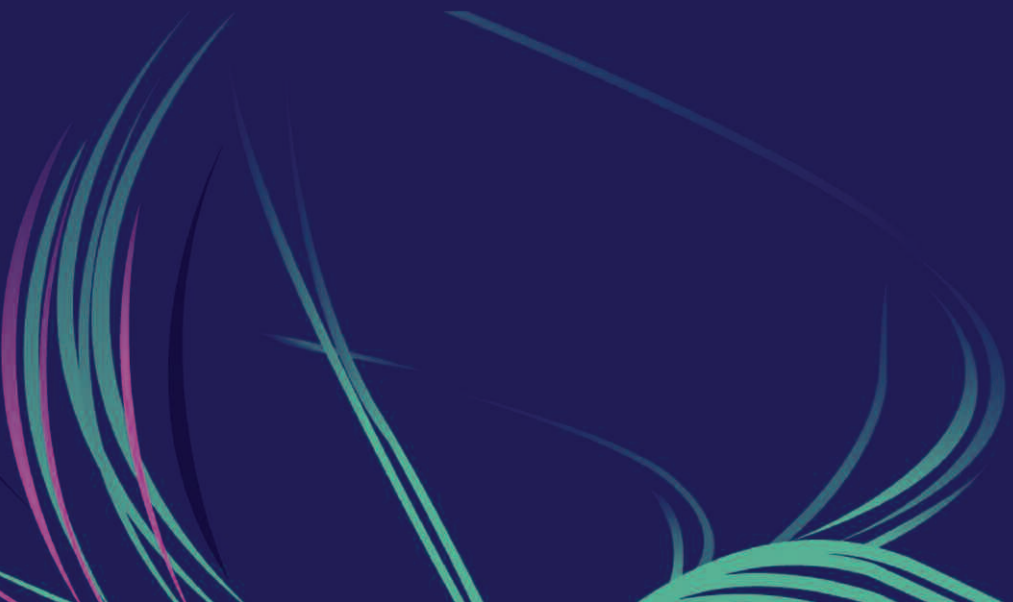

Title	Series No.	
PEACE2TALK	Paper No. 1	November 2009
Intergenerational aspects of the Northern Ireland conflict	Paper No. 2	March 2010
Prejudice and Pride: the transactions of a conference	Paper No. 3	May 2010
Faith and Positive Relations: Studying Faith, Practising Peace.	Paper No. 4	September 2010
The Evaluation of Storytelling as a Peace-Building Methodology	Paper No. 5	November 2010

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